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ABSTRACT

One in a series of annual publications, this booklet contains reviews of books relating to the teaching of English and the language arts. The books are divided into 11 categories: teaching principles and practice; source books and course books; composition, writing, rhetoric; beginning reading; language and oral work; prose; poetry; drama; mass media; literary criticism; and books for the slower learner. Also included are a list of reviewers and an index of books reviewed, listed by title. (GW)

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ENGLISH IN AUSTRALIA

Number 36, August 1976

A.A.T.E.

GUIDE TO ENGLISH BOOKS

Edited by Ken Watson

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

EDITOR'S NOTE

Recent increases in postage costs have had considerable impact upon the *A.A.T.E. Guide*, forcing its amalgamation with *English in Australia* and causing this issue to be almost entirely dependent upon reviewers from New South Wales. The A.A.T.E. is, however, currently examining ways in which reviewers in other States will again be able to contribute to the *Guide*.

In one other way the *Guide* has undergone a change. In the past it has reflected the interests of secondary teachers alone, but this year several reviews of books relating to English in Years 1-6 have been included. It is hoped that more material of interest to primary teachers will be included next year.

In this, my final year as Editor of the *Guide*, I should like to express my thanks to all those who have contributed to it over the past seven years, and particularly to A.H. and A.W. Reed Pty Ltd, who have given it so much support.

Ken Watson

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TEACHING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

A Language for Life: The Bullock Report (H.M.S.O.) London, 1975, 609 pp, P'back, U.K. £5.00.

For English teachers, the *Bullock Report* is undoubtedly the book of the year — and is likely to remain so for many years to come. It is, of course, impossible to do the Report justice in the space available here, and in any case it has already been the subject of a long review article in *English in Australia No 33* and will be analysed in some detail in a forthcoming issue of *Education News*. A few general points can, however, be made.

In the first place, Australian teachers should not assume that a report emanating from the U.K. will have only limited relevance here. Almost every word of the *Bullock Report* has significance for Australian teachers of English.

Secondly, teachers should not allow themselves to be daunted by the size of the Report. Far from being overlong, it is a masterpiece of compression, covering everything from the role of language in the child's development to the problems of adult illiterates and migrants. If there is a criticism to be made of the Report, it is that some of the areas are given too little space.

Much of the Report is based on the conviction that "language competence grows incrementally, through an interaction of writing, talk, reading, and experience, and the best teaching deliberately influences the nature and quality of this growth". If teachers do not read all of the Report, they ought at the least to read Parts Three ('Reading') and Four ('Language in the Middle and Secondary Years') which are informed by a considered view of what 'the best teaching' involves. The section on Reading is particularly worthwhile, though one could wish that the Committee had been prepared to grasp the nettle of i.t.a.

In the long run, it may well be that the Report's recommendations on language across the curriculum will have the greatest effect. This, too, is a section that Australian teachers should study, and act upon. — K.W.

The Living Principle: 'English' as a Discipline of Thought by F.R. Leavis (Chatto and Windus) London, 1975, Hard cover, $13.95.

The Preachers of Culture: A Study of English and its Teachers by Margaret Mathieson (George Allen and Unwin) London, 1975, 233 pp, P'back, $7.90.

In her history of ideas about English, Margaret Mathieson rightly gives a whole chapter to Leavis, whose new book sums up longstanding principles of his thought. A philosophy of English as a discipline is outlined in a long essay on Thought, Language and Objectivity, followed by exemplary analyses of literary texts including T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. The theory of 'English' put forward is that of the study of creative writers' contributions to a continuing tradition in language and culture. The training involved is a training in

sensitivity and judgment which embraces linguistic, social, aesthetic and moral awareness in ways that are markedly distinct from the training involved in other disciplines such as philosophy or social sciences.

The Living Principle is, as one would expect from Leavis, both subtle and polemical. It must be regarded as essential reading for anyone who cares about English as a subject important to civilization and education. Its application to schools is not confined to how teachers are trained in their discipline.

Margaret Mathieson's study of the ideologies of English is a valuable complement to David Shayer's *History of English in Schools 1900-1970.* Mathieson takes up the issues as they were formulated in the nineteenth century, and traces their development well into the 1970's. The title comes from a remark of Matthew Arnold's to the effect that the preachers of culture were long likely to have a hard time of it in Britain. In the ideological statements or "prescriptive writings" about English analysed by Mathieson, heavy demands have been placed on the English teacher: ". . . educators have been constantly searching for new, more satisfactory models for English. They must be worthy of respect and at the same time be relevant to changes taking place in wider society. Each new definition has produced a matching definition of the subject's ideal teacher. Ever since its development from basic skills into literature, creativity, growth through linguistic competence and engagement with personal and social problems, requirements of the good teacher have turned, finally, upon the individual personality." (p. 170).

When Mathieson turns from the "prescriptive writings" to examine the background and education of English teachers and the conflicts inherent in their role, she raises sharp questions about the feasibility of *any* of the prescriptions.

It is valuable for ideas about English to be set out in such perspective, and salutory for basic questions to be asked so pertinently. The context is, of course, decidedly British, and the importance of social class divisions to English studies in that country loom large in these works.

When the history of English in Australia comes to be written it will no doubt take account of the different ways in which ideologies have developed here, but the historians will no doubt recognise their debt to Leavis and to Mathieson in elucidating issues of importance wherever English is of concern. — G.L.

Understanding Children Talking by Nancy Martin, Paul Williams, Joan Wilding, Susan Hemmings & Peter Medway, (Penguin Education) 1976, 208 pp, PP'back, $2.95.

The authors state 'This is a book of talk and to a less extent a book about talk.' For this reason it is an important one to read. There are many lengthy transcripts of children and adults talking in different situations which give readers the opportunity to explore the nature of talk, which can, at first sight, look so puzzling when it is written down. Not all the discussions held by these children are successful ones and it is important to discern why this is so rather

than dismissing the experience as a learning failure. The authors make brief comments about the transcripts and ask many questions which they leave the reader to consider. The chapter headings indicate the focus of the writers: Reading a Transcript, Seven Situations, Inner Worlds, Word Talk in School (this chapter includes a transcript of a class discussion of a poem led by a student teacher and a transcript of a small group of children discussing the same poem on their own), Roles and Models, Progress in Talk. A very good introduction for those who want to learn how children talk to learn. — J.R.

Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress by Neville Bennett (Open Books) London, 1976, 201 pp. P'back. U.K. £2.95.

The publicity given the results of the investigation described in this book, mainly by journalists who clearly have not read the report in full, is such as to warrant a much more detailed review than in possible here. It must suffice to say that such headings as 'Old-Style Teaching Wins Out' (*Bulletin*, 22/5/76), whilst they accord to a certain extent with the author's own summing-up, do not fit the evidence he presents. The key table of results (page 177) shows the following gains in mean test scores:

	Reading	Mathematics	English
Formal teaching style	6.1	6.3	5.9
Mixed teaching style	7.6	2.8	9.2
Informal teaching style	3.9	4.6	4.8

This represents a clear victory for 'mixed' teaching styles on both reading and English at upper-primary level. Even supposing the table to be a mass of misprints, the smallness of Bennett's sample of teachers (37, not 871 as *The Bulletin* claims) and the nature of some of his measures (Bennett admits that half the teachers felt that the tests were biased towards formal teaching — particularly the English test) must cast doubt upon the results.

One of the reasons for the publicity given the book, one suspects, is its readability. And in fairness to Dr Bennett, he is not nearly as dogmatic about his findings as press reports indicate. The strengths of the book lie in the attempt to derive a typology of teaching styles and in the very lucid account of previous research in the area. It does not, however, *prove* anything. — K.W.

Teaching the Elementary Language Arts by Larry D. Kennedy (Harper and Row) Boston, 1975. Hard cover. $11.45.

This book has been written for American schools and illustrates clearly the big problem of attempting to transpose such a text to the Australian scene.

The terminology would baffle most Australian teachers. They would look blankly at such terms as "instructional modalities", "summative testing" and "instructional material centre". What is more, the end of chapter references would be of little use, as they refer to American journals and American English

Teachers' Associations. Very few schools would have access to such documents.

The book relies heavily on the structured tradition of American education, stating goals in terms of competences and behavioural objectives. The taxonomic breakdown of teaching areas is essentially in the Bloomian tradition and the model of "mastery learning" follows a diagnostic/instructional approach.

The early chapters of the book contain an interesting discussion of the behavioural/humanistic debate and there are sections on the nature and origin of language and the place of linguistics in the language arts. It is my opinion that the sum total of all the discussion, however, would best be reduced in form and presented in one of our Australian journals. It is also very sad to see the relatively few illustrations showing children sitting in serried rows being "instructed" by the teacher. We have tried for long enough to work towards a flexible classroom which allows equally flexible teaching.

This book may find its way onto some academic shelves. It will be of little use in our classrooms or on the shelves of our teachers. In spite of the high quality production and well written text, the book is just not our scene. — G.C.W.

Teaching English Today by Dwight L. Burton, Kenneth Donelson, Bryant Fillion, Beverley Haley (Houghton Mifflin,) Boston, 1975, 374 pp, Hard cover, $13.15.

There is not time to review this apparently well-organised book. I respect Burton as a long-time and eminent authority in English teaching and feel sure the book will have useful things to say.

Here is a list of main chapter headings: The English Teachers Today; Students Today; Planning for Instruction; Oral Language in the English Program; Teaching Written Composition; Teaching Literature; Teaching Language; English and the Non-Print Media; Teacher Accountability and Evaluation of Student Performance; A Code for Prospective Teachers.

There are also four splendid appendixes: 100 Junior Novels for English Classes; 100 Short Films; 18 thematic Unit Ideas; 20 Sample Activity Cards.

But why, oh, why in this comprehensive tome is there not a single photograph — scarcely even a diagram? — R.D.W.

Mixed Ability Grouping by R. Peter Davies (Temple Smith), London, 1975, 215 pp, Hard cover, $9.65.

With more and more secondary schools considering the possibility of de-streaming their junior forms, this book should be welcomed, since it combines discussion of the pros and cons (mainly the pros) with practical advice. Wisely, it stresses the importance of careful preparation before de-steaming, and recognises that teachers facing mixed-ability classes for the first time must be prepared to alter their teaching methods.

Apart from Davies himself, four other teachers have contributed chapters on their experience of mixed-ability teaching in the subject areas of English, History, French, Mathematics and Science. Davies also examines ways of approaching remedial work, and the problems of marking, assessing and reporting.

What seems to emerge from the chapter on English is that mixed-ability teaching in our subject poses fewer problems than in other subjects. Any English teacher reading it will probably not learn anything new, but he will be left with the feeling that teaching a mixed-ability group may not be so difficult after all.

It is evident from the book as a whole that a genuine commitment to mixed-ability grouping is necessary if the experiment is to meet with success. — K.W.

The Remedial Teacher's Handbook by P. Westwood (Oliver & Boyd) Edinburgh, 1975, P'back, $6.95.

This book attempts to provide the teacher with the means of recognising, diagnosing and treating remedial problems at all levels — infants, primary, secondary and adult.

The book's aims are indeed grand but it has considerable success in achieving them by treating together the features of remediation in the areas of oracy, literacy, and, almost surprisingly, numeracy. These are traced from the nursery through to adulthood.

The author does not consider that it is his function to analyse the causes that make remediation necessary. Rather he suggests, quite correctly I believe, that once the need is recognised the procedures to be followed by the teacher are substantially the same.

After discussing means by which learning difficulties can be recognised in infancy, the author considers the uses and abuses of standardised tests between the lower primary and secondary. The teacher who wishes to use standardised group tests to identify slow learner students will find most valuable the fairly detailed description of the nature and suitability of a wide variety of intelligence, reading attainment, spelling and numerical ability tests. A variety of means for assessing skill in oral language, reading and appraising written language are also described. In each area the description is very comprehensive and includes several case studies to illustrate the procedures in practice.

After covering the issue of diagnosis Peter Westwood then develops the other major issue, that of remedial teaching. In each of the areas of oral language, reading, writing, spelling and number work he presents step-by-step teaching procedures. The book concludes with an examination of some methods of organising special education in the ordinary school. Although the book is written with reference to the English school system it is still most applicable here.

There are several features of *The Remedial Teacher's Handbook* that make it a valuable reference text for education at all levels. It is, in fact, a handbook.

It provides specific suggestions and programmed procedures for teaching remedial students. At a time when "standards" of student performance are such a public issue and theories concerning remediation are so varied, this book provides practical help for the teacher who is faced with the real problems of the classroom. — G.J.C.

Literacy: Language-Experience Approaches by Nora Goddard, Macmillan, London, 1974, 144 pp, P'back, $3.95.

Miss Goddard's book is one of a series of *Language Guides* published by Macmillan with primary and infants teachers in mind. It provides a concise and very readable exposition of those approaches to literacy broadly classifiable as 'Language-experience'.

The main strength of language-experience approaches to reading and writing is that from the beginning they emphasise these as *meaningful* activities. Miss Goddard argues persuasively that if a child learns the skill of reading in a context divorced from his real interests — as is common in skills-based approaches — it will appear from the beginning to have little relevance to the rest of his life. Central to language-experience approaches to literacy is the belief that, from the beginning, reading and writing, like spoken language, should express a child's own thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Unlike the more extreme advocates of these approaches, Miss Goddard does not turn her back upon phonics. She believes that it is important to provide children with phonic tools, but that training in word-attack skills must never be allowed to destroy the spontaneity of language-experience approaches, or make the children feel that they are engaged in meaningless activities.

For teachers of children between the ages of five and seven, one of the most interesting parts of the book will be chapter 6. Here Miss Goddard describes five infants schools which successfully practise the approaches she advocates. The next chapter describes the individual contributions of three teachers in the promotion of a language-experience approach.

The whole book is informed by a view of literacy as not merely 'cracking the code' but as a means of extending the child's intellectual and emotional range. There is no dogmatism apparent; the author states that "there is no method of teaching literacy which will not be at least reasonably successful if practised with sufficient confidence". She does, however, manage to convince the reader that "taking into account both what is known about child development and the complexity of the task of learning to read and to write, language-experience approaches to literacy offer the most constructive solution". — K.W.

Modern Innovations in the Teaching of Reading by Donald and Louise Moyle (University of London Press) London, 1974, P'back, $5.25.

This book is a second edition of the UKRA well-known monograph on approaches to the teaching of reading. Its importance lies in its sensible and perceptive analysis of approaches and schemes used in teaching reading in the U.K.

The monograph covers the phonic, linguistic, word whole, language experience and eclectic approaches, and contains sections on reading laboratories and audio-visual material. Useful appendices list the materials discussed and provide a carefully selected bibliography.

There are two serious weaknesses: there is scant discussion of the contribution of the psycholinguists and absolutely nothing on any scheme which finds its genesis on Australian shores. The first is difficult to explain from such eminent scholars in the field; the second points to a serious lack of indigenous Australian literature in the field.

One point should be stressed, however. The Moyles have pointed out the well-accepted precept from the *Bullock Report:* It is the teacher, not the scheme which counts in the long run. — G.C.W.

Reading: A Source Book for Teachers eds. Don Drummond and Edna Wignell (Primary Education Pty Ltd) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $4.95.

Reading: A Source Book is an excellent contribution to the field. It provides a timely handbook for Australian teachers at a time when reading is experiencing an increased emphasis, K through 12. It presents an eclectic view, taking into consideration the wide possibility of approaches and materials available to teachers, and stresses a wise balance between theory and practice.

There is great value in the well sifted appendices which sum up and describe reading materials (including current price) and the lists of available reading testing material with an analysis of type of test, grade suitability and areas sampled. Short sections on thematic teaching and aids for book selection in literature are also valuable.

My only criticism of the source book is that its scope tends to limit the depth in some areas. There are omissions which the teacher and college student will need to fill in. No book of 200 pages could give the required depth across the whole spectrum, however, and this book would not claim to do so. I would recommend it as a useful handbook to teachers and a very helpful basic text for college students who are looking at reading as both part of the language arts and an area in its own right. — G.C.W.

Beyond Initial Reading by John Potts (Allen and Unwin) London 1976, 115 pp., P'back, $5.30.

Despite its limitations, this book is available one as an introduction to the field of reading skills in the secondary and upper primary school. Potts is concerned that teachers help pupils systematically to develop both reading study skills and to increased enjoyment in recreational reading. Areas of concern include careful teaching in both literal and inferential comprehension, from basic to advanced reference skills, and in note-making as a reading study skill. Too often teachers give vague directions and hope for results; from this they tend to see pupils in proficient, or poor in reading skills categories, without specifically teaching the skills towards efficiency.

The book gives a comprehensive overview of reading needs with suggested approaches for the teacher. While discussion is chiefly directed to the

mainstream of the school, one section considers reading failure and remedial reading.

The systematic mastery of skills is placed clearly in the context of language, social and personal experience. Potts takes into account both the findings of the Bullock report and the work of British linguists on language maturity, and socio-cultural factors in reading.

Written in a clear and readable prose style, technical terms are avoided. Layout is well designed for easy reference, and each topic considered lucidly and briefly. Too briefly: the weakness of the book is a lack of depth of exploration of each issue. It would be very rewarding to pursue reading from the commendable bibliographies which close each section.

A copy of *Beyond Initial Reading* has a place in each staff library as introduction to a most significant field of teaching. — R.L.

The New English — How To ed. R.D. Walshe, Primary English Teachers' Association of NSW) 1976, 208 pp, P'back, $3.00.

This is a beautifully produced journal that is certainly, as the sub-title says, "almost a handbook of language arts teaching in primary and infants schools". But it is of more than passing interest to English teachers in secondary schools too.

There are sections headed: The Learning Environment, Talking/Listening, Reading, Writing, Drama, Media, Library, Evaluation, Special Articles, and Children's Writing. Contributions are from the Director of Primary Education and the Director of Studies in the NSW Department of Education, Primary English Advisers, University and Teachers' College people, primary school principals and teachers from both state and private schools, and children aged 6 to 12.

The reading is fascinating, illustration copious — indeed, there is a special 32-page section of colour photographs showing learning in process. Articles are not highly theoretical, but full of practical, imaginative ideas just waiting to be put into practice in the classroom.

This book (and I use the term advisedly) should be an invaluable aid to beginning teachers and should also boost the imagination of even the most experienced teacher. — J.F.

(Continued from page 56)

the interests and experience of pupils in Years 7 and 8. The editors state that they have avoided presenting poems of the 'cultural heritage' type; instead they have selected poems 'dealing with subjects that fall within the actual or imaginative experience of students'. Out of a total of 118 poems, 47 are by school pupils. Recommended for use in junior secondary forms.

The World's Contracted Thus is the very opposite — an anthology of 'the cultural heritage', bringing together once more the poems and poets of the tradition, which one can find in a dozen other anthologies. — M.P.

SOURCE BOOKS AND COURSE BOOKS

Some Words Can Fly by Margaret Moore (McGraw-Hill) Sydney, 1975, 168 pp., Hardback $6.50.

The author's introduction, written for students, emphasizes the need for student centred activity, lots of personal writing, a scrap-book of printed matter that they find interesting as individuals and interest as the basis of their language activity in early secondary school.

The book, very much a course book, remains true to this philosophy, with lots of suggestions for things to do alone, in pairs and in groups. It suggests classroom activities, with detailed instructions, so that students can talk, read, act and write about whatever they have experienced within the broadly thematic units.

Photographs and extracts are very well chosen. Language is always a major consideration. Wider reading suggestions abound for students at about Year 7.

The lay out could be more imaginative but the print is clear and well spaced. More effective line drawings than those used here are deserved by the rest of the book.

The author is very intrusive. The course book rests on a relationship between her and the student with detailed explanations and suggestions about activities. That understood, anybody who requires far more ideas for imaginative activity than are usually found in two or three course books, should certainly examine *Some Words Can Fly*. — J.W.

Impact Assignments in English (Second Edition) by R.B. Heath (Longman) London, P'back, $4.95.

More Impact by R.B. Heath, B.D. Elder (Longman) Melbourne, — back, $3.50.

These two assignment books can be considered together as the material in them is substantially the same. A quite favourable reaction to *Impact Assignments* became disappointment with *More Impact* when it became evident that the title does not mean further different assignments of the same type but a substantial repetition of *Impact Assignments*. Where *Impact Assignments in English* is intended as a two-year course for students in England, *More Impact* is a condensed version of one year's work adapted for Australian schools. As an example one exercise in *Impact Assignments* is based on four photographs of the Chichester Festival Theatre: an identical exercise in *More Impact* is based on photographs of the Adelaide Festival Theatre.

As provided, the material in *Impact Assignments* is quite meaningful to our students. I believe it represents better value.

The approach of these books is an effective one. Each book contains a series of assignments based on a variety of source material. The source material includes: poetry; photographs; passages of fiction; passages from technical books; advertisements; drama extracts; statistics; diagrams and graphs etc. A broad range of activities is included. Some of the source material calls for comprehension, interpretation and comment. Other activities include letter writing, note making, summarising, report writing, as well as others that look at specific examples of language in use.

A particularly useful addition to the book is a reference section which provides detailed guidance in and examples of: planning an essay; writing a formal letter; summarising; note making; interpreting statistics; and comprehension.

Despite its English setting *Impact Assignments in English* presents a very practical approach to the use of English with stimulating source material and a varied range of activities. *More Impact*, in a condensed form, provides the same variety of activities with material adapted for Australian students. Both texts would be suited to a range of students in Years 8 to 10. — G.J.C.

Pinch Me, I Must be Dreaming ed Esme Robinson and Donna Ryan (Holt Saunders) Sydney, 1975, 160 pp., P'back, $2.95.

Shades of Happiness ed Maureen Stewart (Holt Saunders) Sydney, 1974, 152 pp., P'back, $2.95.

As one who enjoys teaching from several of the original Impact Series I applaud the concept of an Australian Impact series consisting of two titles at each of four levels. In format and binding these titles follow the American series very closely: sound binding, imaginative use of black-and-white drawings and photographs, and clearly printed, eye-catching text. Content is also the familiar blend of poems, extracts and articles loosely linked by a common theme.

In *Pinch Me, I Must be Dreaming*, intended more or less for students in Year 8, the content deals with witches, ghosts, rituals, secrets, superstition and magic: the kind of imaginative mixture which younger students find irresistible. Here many of the articles are informative, dealing with the origins of sayings, superstitions, leisure activities and legends. Australian content is high without giving the impression of being included solely because it is Australian and the collection is certainly worthy of attention.

Shades of Happiness is designed for students in Year 10 and older. Poems, songs and extracts are supplemented with examples of children's writing about their own views of happiness to encourage readers to draw on their own experiences: an approach which I find to be most useful. Some photographs are very effective. In general the literature included should involve readers quite effectively by appealing to the interests and concerns of the age group although some teachers may consider particular items to be a shade too predictable.

As with all source books teachers owe it to their students to draw selectively upon the material presented.

At $2.95 a copy of both titles represent good value and the forthcoming publication of a Teacher's Guide for the series should help to increase their attraction. — J.W.

Whywords by Alan Burton, Peter Goddard, Annette Hall, Charmaine Pountney (Reed Education) 1975, Wellington, N.Z., P'back.

You and Me — Exploring the Sense Functions of Language (for 14 & 15 year olds), $2.85.

How do you Know -- The Language of Facts and Informing (for 14-16 year olds), $3.85.

These fine books are two in a series called *Whywords* based on a simplified grouping of Professor Halliday's seven functions of language. *How Do You Know*, the better of the two, commences with an excellent study of the evolution of language via symbols. Unlike some source books in recent years, the focus in this book is squarely on *language*. There are many very interesting examples and resources used but they 'hang together' not as arbitrarily chosen and arranged "themes", but according to their language functions. *How Do You Know* flushes out in interesting and challenging ways the goals of the so-called "New English." The authors are sensitive to the nuances and flexibility of language as they investigate the language we use when we ask questions and seek answers. The principle of the interrelationship between "what" is said and "how" it is said is well grasped and abundantly demonstrated. There are numerous language exercises to help students understand and practise the skills required in using language effectively and flexibly.

You and Me is slighter — in quantity and quality. It explores the language of personal relationships. The preface claims that "the text contains language samples from everyday contexts and from literary sources." The selections from everyday contexts are more successful than the literary ones. Indeed there is a curious lack of poetry in this book purporting to explore "the language of personal identity and social relationships '.

Both books naturally feature New Zealand products and personalities in their source material. However, this is not a real problem — the Australian equivalent, where substitution may be necessary, is easy to find. This reviewer can recommend the books especially to teachers disillusioned by their experience with "theme" Books yet having no desire to return to the old style of textbook. They are source books based on a sound grasp of language theory. — P.K.B.

The Language of Living by J. Finney, P. Smart (Reed) Sydney, 1975, 150 pp., P'back, $3.50.

It is a most pleasing experience to open a course book which has the external appearance of being just another theme book attempting to meet the needs of the English syllabus to find instead that it is not a theme book but that it is one of the very few texts facing the real issues of the Juniot English Syllabus.

The response of many text-book writers to the change in syllabus emphasis from an academic study of traditional grammar to a study of language as an activity has been to throw out the baby along with the bathwater. There has been a need for textbooks which do not merely make use of English language to convey themes and ideas for class treatment but focus the students' attention on the use of language in its varied forms, on the means of communication as well as the message. *The Language of Living* does this most successfully.

The book begins appropriately with the fundamental area of English communication — talking and listening. Attention is directed to forms of oral communication and the ways of increasing their effectiveness. The approach is by suggestions for discussion and written work, source material for consideration and carefully directed questioning.

Using similar approaches (source material; passages, photos, diagrams; directed questioning; suggestions for oral, written, and dramatic activities) the text considers such areas as writing, the media, and reading. Emphasis is constantly placed on the ways in which language is used. Chapters on writing, for example, consider words and their meanings, purposes for writing and the appropriateness of the language used; suggestions for students' writing and means of improving it, and the importance of audience.

Among the features that particularly impress me are: meeting and debating procedures and the functional varieties of language appropriate to different meetings; the initial study of information for prejudice, bias, distinguishing fact and opinion; reasons for varying reading speed and ways of doing so; and the use of the library.

The layout, photography, illustrations and type are most attractive and the book seems to be priced very favourably.

The Language of Living should prove a particularly valuable text book for the more able students in Years 9 and 10 in helping them to look at the areas of language in context. — G.J.C.

English — A Literary Foundation Course by R.S. Fowler and A.J.B. Dick (George Allen & Unwin) London, 1975, 200 pp., P'back, $7.90.

Fowler and Dick's latest offering is based upon two precepts — the Bullock Report's statement that "English is rooted in the processing of experience through language"; and Sweeney's discovery that "Birth, copulation and death. That's all the facts . . . It is one of those execrable, irritating text books that tries to prove how relevant it is to today's youth by compromising any standard of decency which any pupil, let alone any teacher, might have. Of Sweeney's facts, copulation matters most to these two authors, and of the Bullock Report's experiences, only the lowest and least uplifting are available for students to share in.

The book is organised along the tried and tested lines of grouping extracts from literary texts around an artificially-imposed theme, often a theme which is not the central theme of the work of literature from which the extract is taken. Each of the themes is one of the less endearing qualities of the human

race — prejudice, the generation gap, the emptiness and corruption of today's society. By all means let us choose literature to show the truth of our society, but let us also choose literature that shows youth the truths about the greatness of man as well.

Fowler and Dick's text does not commend itself. Students would find the passages depressing, the exercises stultifying — e.g. "If you were able to have a year's reading holiday, which books would you plan to read?" If this is the best our English colleagues can offer us, it is high time we looked to our own resources! — R.K.

Words have Wings D.H. Whitelock & I. Gabriel, (Holt, Rinehart & Winston), Sydney, 1976, 140 pp., Hard cover, $4.25.

Words have wings is "the first book in a series designed to develop skills in English Communication". It would appear to be reasonably useful as a class text in lower-ability Year 7 groups.

The book comprises a series of ten units of narrative material (mainly prose), each followed by questions (very simple) and suggestions for activities. Some of the suggestions are worthwhile and interesting; others hardly worth the effort. (One doesn't really need a textbook to encourage in such terms as: "Finish your display. Present your tapes, talks, poems, etc . . . Invite others to view your classroom display"). Some of the student-directed activities involve "working with words", but the Preface dispels any fear of heavy content: "Grammar is left to the minimum essentials".

It's a strongly-bound, attractive-looking book, well illustrated with large, interesting black-and-white photographs, and quaint cartoon figures. It is perhaps carping to complain that the content material of the book, which appears to be original, is not of particular quality. The authors claim that they have produced a "high interest level text" — it certainly won't pose too many problems in the comprehension, particularly as words of any degree of difficulty at all are glossed as they occur in the text ("available", "confused", "employment", for example.) For groups of slower readers, the book can be recommended as worth the teacher's perusal. More accomplished twelve-year-olds would, I think, find it fairly uninspiring. — F.B.

The Games ed. Peter Moss (Rigby) Adelaide, 1975, 106 pp., P'back, $3.25.

Is There Life on Earth? ed. Peter Moss (Rigby) Adelaide, 1975, 116 pp., P'back, $3.25.

As one would still vividly remembers spending many hours of largely fruitless searching for poems and short stories about sport in order to try to capture the interest of a difficult Year 9 class, I welcome Peter Moss's collection *The Games*, which consists almost entirely of material that is not to be found in other source books. It is good to see those two sadly underrated poets, Brian Jones and Vernon Scannell, represented, in poems about athletics and boxing; included also are poems and stories about almost every other sport, and some splendid black-and-white illustrations, including Drysdale's 'Basketball at Broome' and William Roberts' fine 'The Interval Before Round 10'. Highly recommended, particularly for boys' classes.

Is There Life on Earth? takes its title from a satirical piece by Art Buchwald; it is a collection of science fiction stories and poems. Like *The Games* it is very well presented, but one or two of the pieces, like 'Flowers for Algernon', have been widely anthologised. — K.W.

First Offence — A Selection of Stories and Poems about crime, mystery and detection. ed. Peter D. Ross (Rigby) Adelaide, P'back, 1975, $3.25.

This is a disappointing book. The best pieces in this selection are readily available elsewhere, ie., The Bible's *The Good Samaritan*, Hemingway's *The Killers*, Conan Doyle's *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* and Auden's *O What is That Sound*.

Each story or poem is introduced by several lines of too frequently fulsome praise. The editor's comments are sometimes quite inaccurate. Their very inaccuracy is an unfortunate comment on the quality of the selections made to illustrate this theme of crime, usually murder. An example of the kind of misplaced enthusiasm can be seen in the comment that heralds Barbara Baynton's *The Tramp* (which is another poor off-shoot of *The Drover's Wife*).

> "*The Tramp* is a powerful Australian story of loneliness and terror, fascinating yet horrible. The isolation of the rural Australian life is brilliantly suggested and the writing is tense and packed with incident".

Unfortunately the writing is anything but that; it is turgid and cloyingly melodramatic:

> "Oh, God! Oh, God! Oh, God!" she cries, for they were very close before she could make sure, and then there was the door so locked and barred with many bars. The age it took to tear away the fastenings! . . . She called to him in Christ's name, in her babe's name, still flying like the wind with the speed that deadly peril sends; but the distance grew greater and greater between them, and when she reached the creek her prayers turned to wild shrieks, for there crouched the man she feared, with outstretched hands that caught her ere she saw him".

This is not an isolated example.

An irritating feature of the book is that a number of stories are printed in two columns on each page with each line having only six or seven words. This distracts the eye and disrupts the flow of the story.

The book would appear to be aimed at the brighter students in years nine and ten. However, this reviewer would not recommend the book for class use. The selections are of too uneven a quality; English teachers have enough mediocrity to cope with, without distributing it in book form. — P.K.B.

Mosaics 1 (Investigations) and Mosaics 2 (Explorations) by Josie Stainsby (Longmans), Melbourne, 1975, Illus., 180 pp., Hard cover. 1 — $5.25; 2 — $5.95.

"Social English, with its correlative of language and literature, is alive and well," proclaims the introduction to the second of these books. Those who see

much of the content of today's English courses are becoming more and more sociological-for-its-own-sake will not be impressed by these two Melbourne-produced texts for senior English classes. The content is almost all contemporary (in the case of *Explorations* it seems mainly to come from articles in Victorian newspapers), but it is vital, interesting and relevant, and I can imagine the books being very valuable resources, particularly with students of above-average abilities.

The books aim to stimulate rather than to satisfy. Each sets out to be "an English source book of investigations into language, ideas, culture and literature", attempting to provide students with "areas of ideas, methods of intellectual attack, mental stimulation, source materials and guidelines, all of which are aimed at extending the individual through discussion and exploration". Lofty goals, but I think that the books would be exciting to use, in the right classroom.

Investigations is a wide-ranging study of the ways in which words are used in contemporary English, full of suggestions for further study and research. *Explorations* begins with a "visual index" of twenty-four stimulus photographs (and suggestions for discussion and investigation), then goes on provide verbal "data" on the same social areas. The books are certainly (almost aggressively) modern, though not reliant on strange pictures and other visual gimmickry; also, they are certainly crammed with material. The exceptionally strong binding, together with this density of content, makes them good value, even at these relatively high prices. More conservative teachers, however, may want to have a good look at the books before placing any orders. — F.B.

Smile on the Face of the Tiger by R. Sadler, T. Hayller, C. Powell (John Wiley), Sydney, 1975, 200 pp., Hard cover, $3.95.

Smile on the Face of the Tiger doesn't proceed by themes, or even by chapters. It contains 27 poems (some of which I read for the first time: a number of which I have read in *Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle* et al), 7 complete short stories, 5 scripts (including "Unhand Me Squire", a Good script and an adaptation of the graveyard incident from *Tom Sawyer*), one extract (from Fleming, *Live and Let Die*), one advertisement and one comic strip.

The best way to show what the book is like might be to take a section (from short story to short story/script/extract) and list its contents:

* "Rich Stew" by Gavin Casey
* How well did you read the story? (fairly routine, but necessary content questions)
* Sentence jigsaw-matching up two columns of sentence pieces from the story
* A crossword based on words from the story (in other sections this takes the form of an adaptation of Wonderword, an adaptation of Boxes called word coffins and other word games)
* A grid to be filled in on characters
* A list of mixed up events (including some fakes) to be placed in the order in which they happen

* A character reference (to be made entertaining and rated by a fellow-pupil on the basis of its humour).
* Multiple choice meanings for difficult words in the passage, (with context clues)
* "To the Station" (a poem)
* A diagram to fit incidents of the poem onto in the right sequence
* "To A Trainee Accountant" (a poem)
* Computer Programming Card (Prediction Section) — a variation on multiple choice questions on the poem)
* Computer Assessment Card (which asks for judgements about the trainee accountant's kind of life)
* "My Bus Conductor" (a poem)
* 8 questions concerned with the meaning of the poem.

The layout of the book is good. Illustrations are black and white photographs and sketches and caricature pictures in orange, black and white.

I'd buy it for its original approaches to the usually dreary but necessary jobs of character sketch, plot summary, vocabulary: because its material is complete: and because its addressed to kids colloquially but not condescendingly. — M.M.

If Called by a Panther by R. Sadler, T. Haller, C. Powell (John Wiley), Sydney, 1975, 215 pp., Hard cover, $4.95.

This book is a follow-up to *Smile on the Face of the Tiger*. It follows much the same pattern, with 8 short stories (longer and more demanding), 26 poems, and 6 scripts (of doubtful quality). Some of the flair seems to have vanished: the questions seem more routine, and the activities somewhat tired. I'd be inclined *not* to follow *Smile on the Face of the Tiger* by *If Called by a Panther* with the same class because of the sameness in their structuring that makes everything predictable. *If Called by a Panther* seems to collapse between being an anthology and being a teaching book in a way that *Smile on the Face of the Tiger* doesn't. — M.M.

Standpoints series — a series of four. **On the Warpath** by John Cox; **All in the Mind** by John Payne; **Change the Street** by Anthony Fyson; **Don't Shoot the Goalkeeper** by Jonathan Croall. (Oxford University Press), London, 1976, Illus. P'back, each $2.40.

This new series of source books, each on a specific theme, reminds me of the earlier *Connections* collection, both in the age group at which they appear to be aimed (senior secondary), and in their broad-ranging, but primarily British-biassed content. These are interesting-looking books, square-shaped, and very fully illustrated with photographs, song lyrics (and music), cartoons and documents. Their most immediate value would seem to be as source material or discussion starters for General Studies groups. They have a tough paper cover, are stapled, and should survive normal classroom usage well enough.

The most useful of the four is, I think, *On the Warpath*. It comprises a series of articles on the development of nuclear and chemical warfare since

Hiroshima. The sections on Fire Bombs, Terrorists and Guerillas, Ecocide and Radioactive Fallout tend to be basically descriptive, but the study also includes more provocative articles headed "War makes a man of you", "Nobody's winning", "War will cease when men refuse to fight" and "Is Science to blame?".

All in the Mind is concerned with the various misunderstandings in public attitudes fowards mental illness, *Change the Street* deals with the human problems associated with urban renewal and development, and *Don't Shoot the Goalkeeper* treats "the real pressures and demands on today's top (soccer) players, the media presentation, and so-called 'soccer hooliganism'." — F.B.

Cityscope ed. Patricia Makeham (Holt, Rinehart and Winston) Sydney, 1976, 111 pp., P'back, $3.50.

Song for the Asking ed. Terry Doyle (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975, 158 pp., P'back, $2.95.

Involvement ed. T.V. Cooke (Holt, Rinehart and Winston) Sydney, 1976, 160 pp., P'back, $2.95.

The Hunter and the Hunted ed. Kenyon Calthrop (Pergamon) Oxford, 1974, 91 pp., P'back, $2.15.

Extremely well produced, *Cityscope* brings together prose and poetry illustrating eight aspects of cities and city life (cities of the past, the unpleasant side of city life, fantasy towns etc.). I found it a most engaging collection, though some of the extracts are irritatingly short and many of the questions for discussion either quite pedestrian or too academic. A class set would be a good investment, for while it would probably have its greatest use in about Year 9 or 10, sections of it could be used with most other forms.

Song for the Asking and *Involvement* are the most recent additions to Holt's *Impact Series*. *Involvement* being designed for Level 2 (presumably about Year 8 or 9) and *Song for the Asking* for Level 4. Like the others in the series, these books do not include questions for discussion, and this is one of their strengths. Too often a set of questions simply serves as a straitjacket rather than as a springboard.

Involvement spreads its net widely — from Browning to Konrad Lorenz, from Lawrence to Lennie Lower. Unlike some others in the series (such as *Take My Hand for a While*, reviewed in last year's *Guide*) it does not contain a lot of material readily available elsewhere. It is certainly worth examining.

Song for the Asking, on the other hand, does contain a lot of familiar material, for it is a collection of pop lyrics. 'The aim of the book,' writes Terry Doyle, 'is to induce awareness and discrimination in the pop field, to rip the transistor away from the ear and to encourage students to take stock of what they are listening to.'

The aim is a legitimate one; less certain is the need for an anthology devoted entirely to such material. I can see the usefulness of a copy or two in the English staffroom, to be drawn upon for a unit of work on such a theme, but I

would doubt the advisability of purchasing a class set — at least now, when few schools have much money to spare. After all, it is not very difficult to get the words of 'I Am a Rock' or 'Vincent' if one wants them. Having watched several dozen lessons given by student teachers on 'I Am a Rock', I'm beginning to feel that it is as readily available as 'The Man from Snowy River'!

The Hunter and the Hunted, overlooked when last year's *Guide* was being prepared, is another title in the *Explorations* series issued at intervals over the last six or so years by Pergamon. The familiar questions about hunting are raised in a collection which ranges over equally familiar territory — Durrell, T.H. White, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Green Hills of Africa*, *Moby Dick*. For teachers too hard-pressed or too lazy to look for their own material. — K.W.

People Mirrors by A. Allinson, B. Allinson, J. McInnes (Nelson Language Stimulus Program) Ontario, 1974, P'back.

People Mirrors, 96 pp, $4.50.

People 1, 2, 3, 4, 56 pp, $2.70 ea.

Teacher's Guidebook, 160 pp, $6.75.

Messageways on a Small Planet 2 by H.P. Schoenheimer (Cassell) Melbourne, 1975, 192 pp, P'back, $4.50.

Questionings by Heather Thanos and Peter Jorgensen (Longman) Melbourne, 1975, 167 pp, P'back, $3.95.

The splendid *Nelson Language Stimulus Program*, soundly based on the ideas of Halliday and Britton and ideal for average and slightly below-average pupils, seems to have been largely ignored by Australian teachers. Perhaps it is because they react against the admittedly somewhat gimmicky presentation of the sourcebook that is the central volume of each of its five or six stages and do not investigate the teacher's guidebook and the other stimulus books. For involving the uninvolved, it is hard to think of a better series. The new volumes, *People Mirrors* and *People 1, 2, 3, 4*, maintain the high standard and are appropriate for use in Years 8 and 9. But don't ignore the *Teacher's Guidebook* and *do* have another look at some of the earlier volumes, such as *Multiworlds* and *Manspace*.

There are now so many excellent source books on the market that newcomers have to be very good indeed to be noticed at all. *Messageways 2* seems, on a very quick assessment (although apparently published in 1975 it was not offered for review until late June, when the *Guide* was at the galley-proof stage), to be just such a book. Although the presentation is at times too cluttered, the book includes excellent stimulus material drawn, as in Book 1 of the series, from a range of cultures. Certainly the book is worth examining.

Questionings is, I think, better than its predecessor, *Open the Door* (reviewed in the 1972 *Guide*). Presentation is attractive, and the activities, by and large, are both varied and appropriate. Whilst the book is presumably intended for Year 8, some of the units seem better suited to Year 9, at least as far as interest level is concerned. — K.W.

Communicating: 2 Themes in Integrated English Roslyn Coleborne (McGraw-Hill) 1975, $3.25.

Communicating: 2 is the second in this series of thematic source books. It is a set of nine units covering a wide range of language activities and represents a further example of the type of material being published to support the current thinking about the teaching of English in the primary school.

Although stressing no particular age level, *Communicating: 2* is no doubt the upper primary complement to *Communicating: 1* which appeared under the imprint of Angus and Robertson in 1973.

The ideas in the book are varied and rich; the photography and graphics zxcellent. Children would delight in using the material, and respond positively to the poems written by authors of the same age.

The primary market is well supplied with stimulus material of this type now, and the previous serious absence of source books has at last bee n overcome.

In the hands of imaginative teachers *Communicating: 2* will be a very useful book. It is a pity that it did not appear much closer to the publication of the first book in the series. — G.C.W.

Skills of English 1 by S. Langley and P. Smart (Reed Education) Wellington, N.Z., 1976, 144 pp, P'back, $4.00.

Improve Your Skills in English by L.G. Marsh (Hulton Educational) Amersham, U.K., 1976, 63 pp, P'back, n.p.

These two books are based on what I had thought was the now thoroughly discredited notion that English can be broken down into a large number of discrete skills which can then be practised in isolation from one another. Evidently, however, there are still many teachers who cling to the notion. The two books do make an effort to present the material attractively, by using photographs, drawings, word games and the like, but no amount of dressing up can disguise the fact that these books are basically collections of dummy-run exercises. 'Re-write these sentences, inserting commas where necessary.' 'Fill in the blank spaces with appropriate adjectives.' etc., etc. This reviewer's advice to anyone contemplating purchasing these books is the same as *Punch's* advice to those contemplating marriage: don't. — K.W.

A New English Course by Rhodri Jones (Heineman) London, 1975, P'back, $7.05.

This is a text for specific use in England to prepare candidates individually as private entrants or in class groups for the 'O' level English Language examination.

There are 24 units of work. Each unit includes work on Vocabulary, Language (equated with "various aspects of the organization and presentation of words — the use of the full stop, figures of speech, the punctuation of speech") and spelling.

This work largely involves lists of words to learn to spell, ambiguous sentences to correct, tables of words with blanks to fill, lists of sentences where the pupil has to identify the similes, metaphors etc.

Suggestions for written work are listed in most units and contain such topics as "Shipwrecked", "The Wonders of Science", "Gambling", "The Wild West".

The thrust of this text is on passing the 'O' level examination. There are a number of remarks which set the tone, such as the following:

"As far as the examination requirements are concerned, you don't have to read any books, but reading books is likely to increase your chances of passing."

It is difficult to imagine where this book would be used here, even at half the price. — M.P.

Issues ed. Terry Hayes and Richard Campbell (Cheshire) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $3.95.

This text for H.S.C. English students provides source material for language study. It contains 28 topics for discussion. They deal with contemporary and controversial matters, for example, Even-handed? — The P.L.O. and Australia, The Family Law Bill, Tin Hat Aesthetes: The Green Ban Controversy. There is a limitation in the choice of this material, since much of it will date fairly quickly. This is a minor criticism.

Each topic has a number of questions or tasks set for the students to consider in relation to the prose. These questions direct attention chiefly to an analysis that evaluates effectiveness of argument, methods of argument, methods of persuasion, logic and point of view.

In their introduction to the text the authors spell out their purpose which is twofold; first, to provide stimulating and contemporary source material for senior students and second, specifically "to provide exercises similar in kind to those which have appeared since 1972 in Section D of the Victorian H.S.C. English examination, the heir to the old "clear thinking section." Producing a text of teaching material for the explicit purpose of preparing students for a public examination may not please the purists. Nevertheless there is a need for the convenient collection of such source material drawn from a wide range of contemporary writing.

This text should challenge our senior students and, guided by competent teachers, should stimulate some lively discussion and, one hopes, some objective, informed and clear writing. — M.P.

A Certain Age — Relationships Book 2 by E.J. Pask & A. Crisp (Jacaranda Press) Brisbane, 1975, 101 pp., P'back, $2.50.

Under the headings "Friendship" and "Authority and Independence" the authors have gathered together appropriate poems, prose extracts and newspaper cuttings to illustrate their themes. There are suitably open-ended

questions for discussion or writing following the extracts and the authors invite teachers to "use their discretion in choosing suitable passages" for their classes.

One particularly pleasing feature of this book, apart from the wide range of material offered, is its lay-out and appearance. It looks suitably modern with appealing photos and illustrations but the pages look tidy and purposeful — suggesting that the printed word *is* important as more than just a source of information on a page of gimmicky photos.

At $2.50 this book could be bought in sets of six to ten copies for use by small-groups of pupils working on particular themes. — R.A.

A Certain Age — People Book 3 by E.J. Pask & A. Crisp (Jacaranda Press) Brisbane 1975, 111 pp., P'back, $2.75.

This book offers literature extracts grouped under the headings "Behind the Mask" and "Alone and Afraid". Like its companion volume on "Relationships" material of sufficient depth to involve the older secondary school pupil and may lead to some profitable discussions and writing. Even if the book is used simply for browsing through, it should stimulate wider-reading and be thought provoking. — R.A.

COMPOSITION—WRITING—RHETORIC

Any reasonable definition of 'literacy' has got to say something about competence in both reading *and* writing. How crazy, then, that much public discussion of literacy is concerned with reading only! And some 'experts', alas, are no more careful than the feckless 'public' — witness the big book of essays by American authorities under the misleading title, **Towards a Literate Society.** It is concerned solely with reading. (Edited by John B. Carroll and Jeanne S. Chall, McGraw Hill 1975, 370 pp, $14.10).

How refreshing to turn from that ponderous tome to an entirely sane treatment of the roots of literacy, **What Did I Write?** (Heinemann 1975). It is by Professor Marie M. Clay, the eminent New Zealand authority on reading and writing, whose worth was recognised last year by her elevation to Presidency of the International Reading Association.

This is a scholarly but simply written study of beginning writing. Apart from its morbidly dull cover and hefty price ($5.25 for 84 pages) it is a bright production, full of children's early efforts at composition, together with their illustrations, some in colour.

Whereas, traditionally, reading was taught before writing, Professor Clay shows that both beginning reading and beginning writing should proceed together from the first so that each reinforces the other. Reacting against the traditional question, 'How can the child write words until he can read them?', she demands instead, 'How can any child who is not exceptional learn to read until he can write some words?'

I am tempted to quote her at many points but must confine myself to one further point. Questioning the widespread view that there is some ideal sequence of skills to be developed, she says, 'I doubt whether there is a fixed sequence of learning through which all children must pass, and this raises further doubts in my mind about the value of any sequenced program for reading or writing which proceeds from an adult's logical analysis of the task and not from an observation of what children are doing, and the points at which they, the children, are becoming confused . . . Chance experiences may produce new insights at any time which alter the entire learned pattern.'

What Did I Write? deserves to be required reading for infant and primary teachers, and it should be known to secondary teachers as well.

The massive and forbidding-looking Bullock Report, **A Language for Life** (609 pp.) is widely spoken of as 'the British report on literacy', but it too is quite unbalanced in its relatively skimpy treatment of writing. One gets, indeed, the feeling of a great opportunity missed. Not that what it *does* say about writing is without value; quite the contrary. But it just doesn't say nearly enough.

I find it weak in its presentation of the importance of writing and of the nature of writing as a complex process rather than an act; it is unhelpful about the pre-writing stage (except in stressing the value of talk), not clear enough on how to foster experience-based writing, not at all useful on the conditions in which polishing and rewriting may be expected, not able to say more than the obvious about the value of displaying children's work, and not nearly explicit enough on the need to respond effectively to what each child writes.

A clue to the reasons for this skimpiness is given on page 166: the one and only 'analysis of writing' (i.e. school-of-thought about writing) espoused by the Report has been dealt with more fully elsewhere. What this adds up to, I suppose, is that we must go to the James Britton sources of enlightenment. Subsequently Britton et al have put out **The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18)** (Macmillan, London, 226 pp, UK 6.50) — which is reviewed below. Until this book appeared, the best single account we have had of Britton's theory has been the one in **Explorations in Children's Writing,** ed. Eldonna L. Everttts, available from the ETA of NSW, 96 Chandos Street, Ashfield 2131, $3.20.

The Britton school of writing has very many virtues — but not a monopoly of virtue. There is something irritatingly parochial about a great national report which acts as if there is but one school of good ideas on writing in the whole, wide English-speaking world. There is also, for example, the vast amount of thinking and experiment that goes forward vigorously in the United States — as the publications of the U.S. National Council of Teachers of English regularly show. In last year's *Guide* I gave details of how to subscribe to the main N.C.T.E. journals. During the current year there have been some outstanding numbers on writing, e.g. **English Journal** April 1975, **College Composition and Communication** May 1975, **English Education** January 1975, and also **Research in the Teaching of English** Fall 1974.

I should like to praise highly another U.S. publication that pays a lot of attention to writing: **The Inkwell,** a colourful broadsheet which appears monthly. It costs only $US 8.00 a year (address: Box 1628, East Lansing, Michigan 48823, USA). It bubbles with bright, practical ideas on the whole range of secondary English. Issue No. 10 in 1975 was devoted to writing: 'Writing Reintegrated'. I wish every subject master would send a bank draft for this trivial amount so that this cheery publication, which really invites reading, will be available to teachers on the staffroom table.

The world is full of 'ideas books' for stimulating children to write. They present as a rule a potpourri of poems, quotes, articles, stories, and scripts together with assorted photos, line drawings, cartoons and perhaps even art works in colour. The underlying philosophy is that they can turn kids on and make them eager to write. Perhaps, at times, they do. The opposing philosophy asserts that kids are better employed writing about their personal and classroom experiences, including the books they are reading — which, of course, doesn't call for a special stimulus text.

If you want a good example of the 'ideas book' genre, try **Write: Finding Things to Say any Saying Them** by Clement S. Stacy (Scott Foresman, 256 pp, $4.95). Any teacher would find in it useful material for many writing lessons.

. . . Permit me an afterthought. If you're reading this at a moment when your spirit is dulled or your perspective dimmed, it could mean that you need a re-bore or recharge. Try, in preference to pep pills or a stiff whisky, **Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance** (Corgi P'back, 406 pp, $2.30). It lodges in the mind as few novels have!' exclaimed George Steiner. Actually it's a book about writing rather than about bikes. Even if it doesn't blow your jaded mind, it will certainly cause you to teach composition differently. — R.D.W.

Speaking of Writing ed R.D. Walshe (Published for the E.T.A. of N.S.W. by Reed Education) 1975, 108 pp, P'back, $1.75.

This is a fascinating book in which 'seventeen leading writers of Australian and New Zealand fiction answer questions on their craft'. The questions put to the writers were: What can the novel accomplish that other literary form cannot? Does the modern novel offer more scope to the writer than earlier novels did? What was the genesis of one of your novels? Give a description of how a particular novel took shape. What special problems did you encounter in a particular novel? How much do you revise your work? To what extent is conscious use made of grammatical knowledge? How much are you influenced by other writers? Does your work have a consciously symbolic intention? Which of your novels do you most value? Have you any advice for young writers?

Secondary students and teachers will enjoy it and learn from it. As James Britton et al. in their recent publication on the development of writing abilities have stated, we know very little about the writing process. We do not know how individuals may vary in their requirements for preparation for writing; whether all writers need to write a plan or rough draft of their writing; nor do we know about the number of pauses writers make while writing and the length of these pauses. In school we have tended to make uniform demands of young writers as far as the writing process is concerned because we have assumed the process is the same for everyone.

There is always a fascination in reading about how accomplished artists in any field go about their craft and this little book reveals clearly what an individual matter it is for professional writers. Reading this book should encourage young writers to work over their own writing and to tackle constructively problems they may be encountering with writing. A set of these in senior classrooms would be well worthwhile. — J.R.

The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) (Schools Council Research Studies) by James Britton, Tony Burgess, Nancy Martin, Alex McLeod, Harold Rosen. (Macmillan Education) London, 1975, 226 pp, Hard cover, $23.00.

It is in school that children learn to write and most pupils during their years of school education do more writing than at any other stage of their lives. Despite this preponderance of writing in schools we still know very little about the writing process, the exact nature of the relationship between talk and writing, the range of functions of writing and the development of writing skills. Studies have been made of the grammar of children's writing but these have not taken into account the demands made on the writer by the nature of the

writing task or the influence of the audience on the way the writer perceives his task.

These are some of the matters considered by the members of the Writing Research Project which was established in 1966 with three members who are now well known to teachers of English: James Britton, Nancy Martin and Harold Rosen. This book is the first lengthy report published by the project and covers only the first stages of their research.

One aim of the project was to describe stages in the development of writing abilities. In order to do this the researchers decided they must first develop a model which would enable them to characterize all mature written utterances and *then* go on to trace the developmental steps that led towards these different types of writing. It was obvious too, that different kinds of audience must be established as the nature of the audience influences the writer's response to his task. Of course, in schools most writing is done for the teacher who can take on different roles as audience. "The sense of audience is revealed by the manner in which the *writer* expresses a *relationship* with the *reader* in respect to his (the writer's) understanding." (p. 65) The main categories established were: Self; Teacher; Wider audience; Unknown audience. The category of teacher was subdivided as follows: Child of adolescent to trusted adult; pupil to teacher, general (teacher-learner dialogue), pupil to teacher, particular relationship, pupil to examiner.

The researchers rejected the traditional rhetorical categories of writing and the classifications of personal, impersonal, objective as being deficient for their purposes as outlined above. These do not describe the *development* of writing skills nor do they throw any light on the nature of the composing process. In some ways they are too broad to be useful, as 'description', for example, can include writing about the procedures involved in carrying out a scientific experiment or the appearance of a friend. They were also concerned with producing a model that overarched disciplines and school subjects.

The group were concerned with developing a model that would help answer, in a specifically limited way, the question, 'Why are you writing?' and which would show the development of writing in relation to the development of thinking. Their view of their task was commendably broad. In developing the categories that describe all mature utterances the researchers drew strongly on the work of linguists, particularly Sapir, Dell Hymes and Jakobsen and of the psychologists, Piaget and Vygotsky. Implicit in their approach to this task was the assumption that language works as a symbolic system through which man represents to himself cumulatively what his world is like and his responses are thereafter mediated by that world representation.

The researchers drew particularly on Sapir's theory of the essentially expressive nature of all speech and the way in which it moves to a greater explicitness at the expense of its expressiveness as the need to communicate increases. Expressive language is language which is close to the self and which reveals the speaker's feelings and attitudes as well as conveying information. It assumes a close relationship to the reader or listener and therefore much that is said or written is not made explicit. It is as a consequence relatively unstructured and would seem to be the most accessible form in which to write.

The model developed described the expressive function as the matrix form which a writer moves in one of two opposite directions towards the transactional, an utterance which meets the demands of some kind of participation in the world's affairs, or towards the poetic where writing is primarily for the satisfaction of the writer. The hypothesis formed was that development of writing ability is largely a matter of differentiation and specialisation.

To test the validity of their categories and the hypothesis concerning development of writing skills over two thousand pieces of writing were each read and classified by readers according to audience and function categories. The writings came from English, History, Geography, Religion and Science. The results are interesting ones for teachers in secondary schools. We still do not know what young writers can do, only what they have done. The teacher, as often the only audience in the writing situation, very effectively constrains or opens up opportunities for different kinds of writing particularly by the way young writers perceive him as reader. Evidence suggests little use is made of a 'wider audience' for young writers. Only 3.3% of the total group wrote for interested laymen, peer group or working group.

Transactional writing dominated throughout all secondary years in all the subjects included in this study and within the transactional category one sub-category dominated, the analogic, where writers make classificatory statements and present a sequence of such related statements. The major audience for young writers is the teacher as examiner in 48.7% of all writing. "English is characterized by its under-use (comparatively speaking) of the informative, with the exception of the speculative: and by its near-monopoly of the expressive, the poetic and the 'dummy run'." (p. 168) Expressive and poetic writing are the most closely associated with the pupil writing to the teacher as a general audience. There is thus some confirmation of the research hypotheses that development in writing ability is a process of dissociation and progressive differentiation. The hypothesis that expressive writing is the relatively undifferentiated starting point from which dissociation would take place has been neither proved or disproved in Stage 1 of the research.

As a direct consequence of the work of the Writing Research project the Schools Council 'Writing Across the Curriculum Project', was formed to assist teachers in schools with language problems and to use the ideas suggested in the original research in practical situations. One paragraph here is worth quoting in full:

"The effects of some kinds of teacher intervention have already been observed. Thus, experimental approaches to writing for those who find it most difficult have suggested that deliberate attempts to encourage expressive writing are not effective unless they are accompanied by as deliberate an effort to counter the inhibiting assumptions about writing that pupils bring to the task. The key problem has been seen as one of helping such pupils to draw upon their experiences as talkers. The writing situation has to be close enough to a familiar talk situation for the acquired skill to be used in a modified form; and yet the writing must produce for the writer some satisfaction he could not equally well have achieved by the less laborious process of talking. Another experiment was one which set out to eliminate every trace of the 'examiner

relationship' from a teacher's written response to what his pupils wrote: the effect was described as dramatic." (p. 199) This book makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of the functions of writing and the opportunities available for writing which, at present, are just not taken up in schools. As one would expect the report is very well written, so that readers who are unfamiliar with the ideas expressed about language and writing should have little difficulty in understanding the writers' arguments or the theory from which they developed their model. There are many, many examples of writing from the research sample which have been classified according to the categories of audience and function.

The book concludes by asking a question we should all be asking ourselves: 'How important is writing anyway?' There are many in the community now who claim that so much time spent on writing is wasted time because many teenagers will not need to write at length in their jobs. All teachers may care to ponder the remarks made by the researchers in answer to this: "We should still want to claim a developmental role for writing in school — that is to say, that the talk by which children will govern their lives will require mental abilities that will best be developed by the practice of writing." (p. 201) Do you agree? How many teachers do regard writing in that way? — J.R.

Youth Writes, 1975 & 1976 ed Marcia Kirsten; Produced by the Youth Writes Fellowship Inc. (Reed Education) Sydney, 1975, 95 pp, P'back, $2.50.

Youth Writes is a delight to read. The editorial states concern and disappointment about the standard of poetry writing in comparison to the high quality of prose writing. It is nevertheless a collection of very good writing. There is a freshness and originality, often because the writers use language to record their insights into experiences which they are exploring for the first time. There are puzzles, mysteries, sad and hilarious moments, a wide range for young readers to dip into. The prose writing is of a very high standard. All schools should buy some sets of these. What better way to encourage other young writers than by giving them interesting well writeen pieces by writers from their own age groups? — J.R.

BEGINNING READING

Reading Rigby: An Australian Program by Gregory Blaxell and Gordon Winch (Rigby) Adelaide, 1975.

This is a new Australian Reading series beginning at the pre-reading level. So far it consists of: Teachers' Resource Book ($8); Stimulus Pictures Levels 1 — 6 ($60); Phonic Kit 1 ($14); Reading Books Levels 1, 2, 3-six titles each (65c — 85c ea.)

Blaxell and Winch have come up with a visually varied and exciting, yet original, approach to reading. The 6 reading books in Level 1 contain no vocabulary: only colourful illustrations to stimulate discussion and interest in

(Continued on page 42)

LANGUAGE AND ORAL WORK

The Way of Language: An Introduction by F. West (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) New York, 1975, 250 pp, P'back, $4.75.

The contents page of this book looks both interesting and promising. There are three parts, each with four chapters. Part I *The Spread of Language* takes up the origin of language, a brief history of linguistics, and the development of dialects and language change. Part II, *Language: Structure and Meaning*, turns to more technical matters, covering phonology, morphology, grammar and syntax (sic), and semantics. In Part III, *Language and Man*, West considers the relation with culture, language acquisition, writing and the future of language. It would seem then that most major areas of interest have been opened up.

The trouble comes in the treatment. Essentially the *Way of Language* is a popularisation of the subject. Like so many others in the field, West never quite makes up his mind, and so falters between being rigorously simple for the "layman" (West's term) and exhibiting that he really knows and comprehends the abstruse technicalities of his subject. His fluctuations can be from one extreme to the other, verging on the childish at one moment (p. 14), plunging his reader into difficult matters at another (Grimm's Law if you please on p. 61!). Not everything is ridiculous, but the work is all too bitsy. The author has endeavoured to do too much and so fails to do anything well. It is not even worth having a copy in the library. — R.D.E.

New Objective Tests in English Language by B. Lowe and R.A. Banks (Univ. of London Press) London, 1974, 146 pp, P'back, $3.35.

The "new" English language is characterised by objective testing for some teachers, and this well-compiled text, prepared for O-Level and CSE candidates in England, will meet their needs well. Any teacher, though, faced with the task of setting mock reference tests for Year 10 or (perish the thought), trial comprehension/reading tasks for Years 11 and 12 reading the 2 unit A course, will find this a most useful resource.

There are twenty forty-minute comprehension tests each requiring answers to twenty multiple-choice questions. Each passage is followed by a neat little series of "things to do" entitled "Further Development", perhaps in order to justify the attempting of comprehension exercises removed from the main stream of whatever students are doing.

Purists will doubtless question the validity of a text of test items on which no research is reported, but the explanation of this is simply that none of the tests has been researched in the conventional test-theory sense. A random selection of distractor items showed up no particularly poor distractors, at least to this reviewer. — R.K.

Speech for Life (2nd edition) by C. Burniston (Oxford:Pergamon Press) 1974, 123 pp, Hard cover, $4.50.

It is difficult to assess for whom this book was written. The preface addressed to the teachers who may find themselves "using" the book suggests it is for all young people in the final years of their secondary school life, and yet the "ti tum ti tum" rhymes for active tongues seem better suited to the infants' school while the last chapter is headed "Tomorrow's Adults".

Mrs Burniston maintains a bluff, hearty narrative tone throughout the book that is far too intrusive to enable the reader to feel he is not being patronised:

"Here's a verse that will help you . . ." she writes.

> "As we say it aloud, we not only respond to the rhythm of the verse, but we enjoy the sensuous pleasure of sight, sound, touch and smell of that little scene and feel we are handling the oars in skilful movement" (p. 90).

The verse is from Wordsworth's *The Prelude*.

The trouble with this kind of approach, of course, is that there is a dangerous directedness in the teacher's attitude to the pupils' response to the verse in question. If this book is for all young people, it does talk down to them rather disastrously, and while that may have suited the climate into which the first edition emerged in 1966, now *Speech for Life* seem better suited to the hallowed confines of an independent girls' school than the hugger-mugger of the inner suburban high school.

Suggesting that the book reveals Mrs Burniston's rare gift of being able to talk to our younger teenagers as adults and understanding their problems as adolescents is undoubtedly fatuous, in any event. A good text on teaching spoken English has still to be written, for this is not one. — R.K.

Heinemann Australian Dictionary Heinemann Educational, Melbourne 1976, 1259 pp, Hard cover, $5.95.

It is a pity that the Heinemann editors did not think to define the word *Australian* within the pages of their dictionary, for would-be purchasers need to be cautioned. In the title of this dictionary it has little more than the sense of 'published in Australia.' Certainly this volume cannot be regarded as a sound or thorough representation of Australian English — that is the English that is current here, and not just Australianism.

This observation is not based on the fact that certain words have been omitted. No desk-size dictionary can be expected to be comprehensive, though it is sometimes difficult to understand the rationale here. What is troubling is the quality of the definitions. Too often they are vague, confused, ambiguous, and inadequate. (e.g., those for *home unit, paraffin, prime minister, bush*). Equally unnerving is the practice of having illustrative sentences which are not related to the given definition but which introduce another sense (e.g. *premier*, where the definition is concerned with the sense 'leader of a government' but the supporting sentence illustrates the meaning 'champion, winning team'.) What should have been the central concern of the editors has been treated in a sloppy, undisciplined manner.

That one is not being overly pernickety here but is really touching on something fundamentally awry is confirmed by the Preface. The opening sentence boldly states that the dictionary was written "for Australian secondary students, as well as a wider readership". What does this mean? There is a vast difference between grade 7 and grade 12. What level of secondary student is involved? And what of the "wider readership"? If the editors can be imprecise in the statement of their goals, is it any wonder that they are imprecise in their lexicographical procedures. And the publisher is naive when he boasts as he has done elsewhere that he did not have a qualified lexicographer associated with the dictionary.

One is again concerned when large sweeping claims are made for a work by the publishers themselves. We are also informed in the Preface that "the dictionary is unique in another (sic) sense". The words were grouped according to a number of appropriate subject areas and defined in terms of the group. But anyone knowledgable in the art of lexicography would know that this is not a unique happening. It is a sound approach but it is certainly not a new procedure!

Sadly we must still await a true Australian Dictionary. In the meantime we will have to be content with other better dictionaries on the market than this one. — R.D.E.

Changing English by Simeon Potter. (London: Andre Deutsch) Second Revised Edition, 1975. 206 pp. $9.00.

This new edition amounts not only to a removal of errors in the first edition but also to an updating of the material. Imprecise statements in the previous edition have also been tightened on the way.

The book is concerned to show the nature of the changes taking place in English. To that extent it does not contain much about the theory or history of language that is startlingly novel. Most of what Potter describes has already been commented upon in various places before him. The usefulness of the book is that he gathers the material together in one place, and offers an interesting set of illustrations.

Changing English grew out of a series of radio talks. It is not heavyweight, therefore, and well within the reach of senior students. They should find its contents interesting, though from time to time they may have to grapple with the terminology.

It is good to see Potter recognising that some new items are only fresh applications of established processes (e.g. functional shifts in pronouns, p. 174). The result may be striking, but the way had already been prepared in an analogous structure by an earlier speaker or writer. So often in talking about linguistic change we can overlook this fact that the procedures for change can be well-established.

Potter does not remain objective throughout, and occasionally gives voice to his own opinions, for example on the need for a dictionary of approved spellings (p. 47). This is not necessarily a fault. It adds a liveliness to the text,

and provided students are prepared not to passively accept all they read, these expressions of personal opinion could form the starting point for some useful class debates and discussion on the nature of language.

Changing English is worth adding to the school library. — R.D.E.

Beyond Words — Certificate reading and listening skills, Alan Maley & Alan Duff, (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1976, P'back, Students' Book and Teachers' Book available, $5.20 and $7.80.

This pair of books, designed specifically for use in Cambridge First Certificate classes, could be very useful in assisting teachers looking for material to help meet the "reading" and "listening" requirements of current English syllabuses.

The first book contains twenty units, each beginning with a passage of around 500 words. These are followed by multiple-choice type questions on general comprehension, "true or false", exercises on vocabulary in context, and summary assignments. The passages are of a good interest level, and are drawn from sound contemporary sources: The Times, *Look and Learn* and Lyall Watson's *Supernature*, for example). The book also contains *questions only* on a second set of twenty passages: these are the "listening" exercises. The second set of passages are printed in the companion teachers' book, and are also available (for reluctant teacher-readers?) on reel and cassette tapes. The teachers' book also contains answers to all of the multiple choice questions.

For teachers who believe that objective-question type comprehension exercises are of value in the classroom, these books are well worth a look. They could also be very handy when the time comes to set the occasional class test (or even form examination). The reading and listening extracts are paired, and appropriate, I would think, for our middle secondary students. — F.B.

Work with Language (Arnold) London, 1975, $11.60 pack.

Letters ed. S. Harris and K. Morgan

About Teenagers ed. Brian Harrison

The Language of Religion ed. Keith McWilliams

One of the problems facing teachers using *Language in Use*, the main volume in the Schools Council Program in Linguistics and English Teaching, has been the collection of suitable materials, for the authors of *Language in Use* stress that 'real' spoken or written texts should be used for the work. That is, the texts used should be spoken or written for a purpose, either in or out of school, not 'dummy run' materials manufactured by the teacher or text book writer. Admittedly, the tape accompanying *Language in Use* contains many speech texts which can be used in conjunction with the units or which can be used on their own, but probably because of differences between British and Australian English it will not have the same use as the written materials, for Australian teachers.

Work with Language is an attempt to provide a range of materials for key units of *Language in Use*.

The three wallets published so far contain an excellent collection of material. Each contains, on A4 size sheets, three sets of the same materials with each set consisting of about 30 sheets. There is a wealth of material for classroom use. One may think the *Language of Religion* an unusual choice as the theme for the wallet but as the editor says it is a language with which many learners are now unfamiliar although it is encountered often in written texts and the study of world religion is commonly included in the school curriculum. In the wallet are prayers, hymns, songs, and extracts from the writings of a number of different religions although those from Christianity predominate. Some of the most interesting sheets contain different translations of the same biblical extract, some written in a particular register. I was impressed by the range of uses that became apparent to me as I looked through the wallet. *About Teenagers* contains a variety of materials: newspaper articles, extracts from literature, popular magazines, transcripts of talk by teenagers. 'Amongst the topics included are pop culture, authority relationships, race, leisure, sex, schools and work.' *Letters* contains a fascinating range of real letters: letters to friends, love letters, business letters, family letters. There are almost as many different kinds and styles as there are letters in the wallet. Apart from many other uses these could be used well to indicate how the writer's use of language is shaped by the relationship of understanding that exists between the writer and his reader. — J.R.

Learning How to Mean by M.A.K. Halliday (Edward Arnold) London, 1975, 164 pp, P'back, $9.50.

In this, the most recent title in the series *Explorations in Language Study*, M.A.K. Halliday provides a theoretically and explanatorily adequate socio-semantic account of a young child's language learning. Halliday's account of his son Nigel's language and behaviour in his early years is realistic and thorough: at that stage, too, the structures are simple enough for the account to be complete and verifiable. — J.R.

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books. Levels 2 & 3 within a controlled vocabulary framework, have beautiful artwork, stories and poems. Titles include Play Mr. Wind, Red 5 (Grandad as a 'hot rodder'), The Frog and the Ox (a variation on a familiar theme), Wilga the Witch (very pink with a bump on her nose) and Last Monday (a visit to the park).

The books and pictures of each level cover these six categories: Contemporary World, History, Man's Made World, Folklore and Fable, Natural World, and Fantasy and Imagination. The Stimulus Pictures are backed by notes on background information and graded questions.

An Advisory Panel including Dr Rex Meyer (Science), Vincent Serventy (Natural History) and Prof Russell Ward (History) has ensured that the information offered is correct. — L.A.G.

PROSE

Globe Books (Macmillan) Melbourne 1975. P'back.

Hughie by David Martin 154 pp. $1.75.

Tuned Out by Maia Wojciechowska 105 pp. $1.95.

Appointment With Venus by Jerrard Tickell 191 pp. $1.95.

These are three new titles in this series although all the novels were written some years ago. *Appointment With Venus* tells the story of a British army expedition to the Channel Island of Armorel in World War II to evacuate Venus, a prize breeding cow, to England! Although it is mostly a light-hearted tale there are serious moments when the islanders clash with the German occupation troops, whom they despise. Suitable for Years 7, 8 and 9, this would be a very good novel to include in a class library or as part of a wide reading scheme.

Tuned Out is the story of a boy's disillusionment and dilemma when he finds that his elder brother, who has just come home from college, is a drug addict. I found parts of this book strained credulity. The young addict's rapid change in his perception of himself and his understanding of the reasons for his drug taking happen very quickly in comparison to many real-life situations and the young brother's idealization of the elder who constantly rejects him and is obviously so rude is also difficult to believe in. Suitable for Years 8, 9, 10.

Hughie is about an aboriginal boy's efforts to desegregate use of the swimming pool in the country town where he lives. The novel poses clearly the many problems which develop as the aborigines and their supporters make their protest publicly and strongly. Once their course of action is under way there is no avoiding the disruption of the community and the alienation of friends. David Martin gives no answers, no solutions. An excellent novel for Years 7 & 8. — J.R.

The Black Lamp by Peter Carter (Oxford) London, 1975, P'back, 170 pp. $1.65.

A Handful of Thieves by Nine Bawden (Heinemann New Windmill series) London, 1975, 169 pp. Hard cover, $2.30.

The central incident in *The Black Lamp* is the Massacre of Peterloo. Daniel Cregg, the narrator, becomes a mechanic when his father realises that the days of handweavers are numbered. His father reluctantly becomes involved in politics and is badly wounded at Peterloo. The novel stresses the independence and dignity of the handweavers, which chances to subservience and degradation when factories take over. For able readers in Years 8 and 9.

In *A Handful of Thieves*, Granny's peculiar boarder steals money from her teapot in the kitchen; her grandson and his friends pursue the thief. It's not a substantial enough book for detailed study, but it's not a bad yarn and doesn't require terribly sophisticated reading skills. For Years 5 — 7. — M.M.

Shadow of a Bull by Maia Wojciechowska (Globe Books) Australia, 1975, 110 pp, P'back, $1.95.

The Australian junior secondary student may well enjoy this story of the boy haunted by the shadow of a father who was a brilliant bullfighter before his death. The novel's concern is with the way in which the boy comes to acknowledge publicly that bullfighting is not for him, despite the expectations of his many well-wishers.

The novel provides much detailed information about bullfighting, which is sufficiently beyond the experience of the Australian to offer interest. The language used is simple and the novel unfolds and develops at a good pace. — F.C.

Mister Johnson by Joyce Cary — first published 1959 — with an introduction by Professor Echeruo of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (Heritage of Literature Series, Longmans) London, 1975, 263 pp, P'back, $2.95.

Like most of Cary's work, this is a splendid novel and one can readily recommend it for use with senior school students as well as undergraduates.

Mister Johnson, with his penchant for getting into and out of scrapes, his absurd and sad attempts to be like a white man, his rich capacity to "turn the crudest and simplest form of fodder into beauty and power of his own quality," must remain one of Cary's most successful creations.

Cary says himself that Mr Johnson is a "poet who creates for himself a glorious destiny," and ironically, humorously, and painfully, Johnson shapes his destiny in the arrogant and unsympathetic environment of colonially administered Africa.

Johnson is indeed shaped a part by the colonial experience and Cary never allows us to forget the extraordinary assumptions and presumptions of colonial rule. But the novel is not solely or even primarily, about the colonial experience, and here I would take issue with Professor Echeruo, in his introduction, for he implies that it is largely about colonial rule. *Mr Johnson* is a study of a humble young African who is also an artist in living. He who forgets or fails to acknowledge this, in my view, fails finally to understand the novel. To this extent, the introductory notes to this particular edition are not entirely helpful to the young student. — F.C.

Caddie — The Autobiography of a Sydney Barmaid, introduced by Dymphna Cusack (Sun Books) Melbourne, 1966, 199 pp, P'back, $1.95.

Caddie was first written in 1953, but it has received a recent revival of interest with the appearance of Tony Buckley's film production of the same name.

The book is the story of a woman born at the start of the century outside Sydney. Hers was a hard life, for a childhood made difficult by an

unsympathetic father was followed by a marriage which failed, leaving Caddie personal story is a good one, she offers valuable glimpses of life in Sydney in the 20's and 30's — glimpses which could well be used by the imaginative history as well as English teacher.

The book would be of interest to most secondary school pupils and would be an ideal example of non-fiction such as is sought by the New South Wales Junior English Syllabus. — F.C.

Short Story Quest ed C. Coroneos (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1975, 193 pp, P'back, $2.50.

Collections of short stories for use in schools are always a welcome addition to the range of books available to children to read.

The collection here is generally good and should be enjoyable to junior secondary students, though I'm not sure I would have started with the selection allotted to Myths and Legends. The other categories — "Mystery and Suspense", "Humour", and "People, Animals and Things" makes more immediately appealing reading.

The editor provides some useful exercises and discussion points, as well as notes on the writers, sensibly placed at the back so that biographical information can be used if it is needed, or left alone. — F.C.

One More River by L.R. Banks (Peacock) Harmondsworth, 1975, P'back, $1.95.

"One more river
And that's the river of Jordan"

This is an entertaining novel about an over-indulged fourteen-year-old Jewish girl, Lesley Shelby.

As the story opens she is living in Saskatoon in the Canadian Prairies. The story traces her development and the conflict she faces from the moment her father calmly announces that they are going to move to Israel to live in a kibbutz on the banks of the River Jordan, the border between Israel and the enemy Arab territory.

Although the author's handling of the father's decision to move is rather awkward the novel develops quickly tracing Lesley's difficulty in making the physical and emotional adjustment to the very spartan life. The atmosphere of the kibbutz is vividly created as are Lesley's problems in making friends and accepting the language. The continual presence of danger from attack leads eventually into the Six Day War and we are given a close look at the Israeli view of it.

The story should have appeal to students, particularly girls, in Years 9 & 10. It is both entertaining and an insight into the tensions of Israeli life. — G.J.C.

Between High Walls by Grace Foakes (Athena/Pergamon) London, 1974, 83 pp, P'back, $2.00.

In *Between High Walls* Mrs Foakes gives an account of her childhood in London's East End at the beginning of the century. It is a simple story —

artless, in the best sense of that word — of a childhood spent in desperate poverty, but not without its joys. Reading it could be an illuminating experience for children in Years 7, 8 and 9, especially girls. Highly recommended. — K.W.

A Pair of Jesus-Boots by Sylvia Sherry (Heinemann New Windmill Books) London, 1975, 135 pp, Hard cover, $2.65.

Bless the Beasts and Children by Glendon Swarthout (Heinemann New Windmill Books) London, 1975, 151 pp, Hard cover, $2.85.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Alexander Solzhenitsyn (Heinemann New Windmill Books) London, 1974, 124 pp, Hard cover, $2.40.

A Pair of Jesus-Boots as an entertaining story of juvenile gangs in Liverpool. Well written, it should appeal strongly to boys in Years 7 and 8, especially those who live in inner-city areas.

Bless the Beasts and Children is a powerful story of a group of misfit American boys at a summer camp who attempt to prevent the slaughter of some buffalo. While this may sound innocuous, the novel does not pull any punches; it is not a book for junior secondary classes, but would probably prove a thought-provoking novel for class study by boys in Year 10.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich is too well known to need review here. Suffice to say that it is appropriate for use in senior classes and that the New Windmill edition provides a relatively cheap cased edition for schools that don't want the paperback. — K.W.

The Ghost Downstairs by Leon Garfield (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1975, 95 pp, P'back, $1.55.

The Children of Green Knowe by Lucy Boston (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1975, 158 pp, P'back, $1.25.

The Driftway by Penelope Lively (Pan Piccolo) London, 1976, 144 pp, P'back, $1.25.

When asked, Leon Garfield says that his best book is *The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris*. Many of his readers, however, would argue that *The Ghost Downstairs*, that brilliant variation on the Faust theme, is his greatest achievement. Mr Fast signs away seven years off the end of his life for the riches of the world, but finds that he loses, not the last seven years, but the first. Then the lost ghost of his own childhood comes to haunt him. A short, brilliant tale, for able readers in Years 7, 8 and 9.

Lucy Boston's *The Children of Green Knowe*, first published in 1954, has had to wait a long time to join the Puffin list. In it, Tolly, a boy visiting Green Knowe, encounters some children who lived there in the past and who died in the Great Plague of 1665. A charming fantasy, it is suitable for Years 6 and 7.

Penelope Lively's *The Driftway* is also for younger children — say Years 5, 6 and possibly 7. — and also deals with communication with past generations. Nine-year-old Paul, running away from home, travels along an old drovers'

road and continually receives messages from those who have travelled along it in the past. An intriguing and very well written tale. — K.W.

Pennington's Heir by K.M. Peyton (Oxford) London, 1975, 185 pp, P'back, $1.65.

A Cold Wind Blowing by Barbara Willard (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1974, 220 pp, P'back, $1.00.

The Iron Lily by Barbara Willard (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1975, 224 pp, P'back, $1.50.

No Beat of Drum by Hester Burton (Oxford) London, 1975, 152 pp, P'back, $1.65.

By now the first two books of K.M. Peyton's *Pennington* trilogy, *Pennington's Seventeenth Summer* and *The Beethoven Medal*, must be known to all teachers of Years 9 and 10. For sheer readability, Miss Peyton's books have few rivals, and the two books just mentioned seldom fail to capture the interest of the most reluctant reader in this age group. Now *Pennington's Heir*, telling of the shotgun marriage of Patrick and Ruth, is in paperback, and is likely to prove just as successful. But while *The Beethoven Medal* in particular is an appropriate choice for class study, providing many opportunities for rewarding discussion and writing, *Pennington's Heir* is more suited to wide-reading lists, as it is marred by several improbabilities in the plot.

Barbara Willard's *Mantlemass* novels are among the most distinguished examples of historical fiction for children. *A Cold Wind Blowing*, the third of the series, is in many ways the most memorable, and though its background, the dissolution of the monasteries, might seem too remote from Australian children, it would make rewarding class study in co-educational and girls' classes in Year 9, and possibly Year 8. Its successor, *The Iron Lily*, is likely to appeal mainly to girls. The final novel in the series, *Harrow and Harvest*, a study of conflicting loyalties during the English Civil War, will soon be in paperback.

It is a curious fact that there are few good Australian historical novels for children, though there are any number of ploddingly earnest books like *John of the Sirius* and *Verity of Sydney Town*. One of the few good children's novels dealing — at least in part — with early Australian history has, in fact, been written by an English author, Hester Burton. *No Beat of Drum* tells of transportation to Van Diemen's Land; it will appeal to both boys and girls in Years 8 and 9 — K.W.

The Breaking of Arnold by Stanley Watts (Macmillan — Topliner Redstar) London, 1975, 110 pp, P'back, $1.25.

Andra by Louise Lawrence (Macmillan — Topliner Redstar) London, 1975, 189 pp, P'back, $1.25.

Us Boys of Westcroft by Petronella Breinburg (Macmillan — Topliner) London, 1975, 127 pp, P'back, $1.25.

The Strangers by Ann Schlee (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1975, 152 pp, P'back, $1.25.

The Breaking of Arnold is a story about a boy wondering just what he is going to do when school is over. Most of his gang know where they are going and seem happy with their decisions, but Arnold hasn't the faintest idea what he would like to do. His problem is finally resolved in a whirlwind series of events, but unfortunately the author has tried to throw a little too much into the story, with the result that plot and characterisation suffer.

Much better is *Andra*, a piece of science fiction that should appeal to those not usually inclined towards this genre. It is set 2,000 years in the future, where Andra, the main character, has received the first brain graft. The scientists concerned later begin to rue the day of the operation, as Andra rocks the boat of their hitherto stable society. To me, the book seems well suited to about Year 9 as literature and as a social document on revolution. It is a good illustration of the way that any revolutionary can be married by individual prejudice and of the way in which a revolution that seems to benefit mankind may ultimately destroy it. Recommended.

The central character of *Us Boys of Westcroft* is a boy being given his last chance at Westcroft, a school for delinquents near London. Although some of the events are overdone, the novel has its merits and should appeal to Years 8 and 9.

The Strangers could be used in either Year 7 or 8 and has a fairly high interest level. Set on the Scilly Isle of Tresco, it has much the same appeal as *The Count of Monte Christo*. A story of kids, the sea and adventure, it is a book with broad appeal. It does run a bit long in spots, but not enough to ruin the book — it is respectable but not outstanding. — L.T.G.

The Ghost of Thomas Kempe by Penelope Lively (Heinemann New Windmill) London, 1975, 153 pp., Hard cover, $2.85.

The Lotus Caves by John Christopher (Heinemann New Windmill) London, 1975, 156 pp., Hard cover, $2.85.

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase by Joan Aiken (Hutchinson Unicorn Books) London, 1975, 159 pp., Hard cover, $4.80.

The Gift by Peter Dickinson (Puffin) Harmondsworth, 1975, 172 pp, P'back, $1.65.

The Shape of Three by Lilith Norman (Armada Lion) London, 1975, 159 pp., P'back, $90 cents.

The Runaways by Victor Canning (Heinemann Windmill) 1975, 222 pp., Hard cover, $2.85.

Penelope Lively is a witty and original writer, but I was surprised when *The Ghost of Thomas Kempe* won the Carnegie Medal in 1973. It is a light and humorous tale of the ghost of a seventeenth-century sorcerer who attempts to make a modern boy his apprentice. A diverting story, appealing to able readers in Years 6 and 7, it nevertheless lacks sufficient substance for class study. Recommended for wide reading lists.

The Lotus Caves is more challenging in the ideas it offers for consideration

by its readers. Set in the future, it nevertheless poses questions about modern life — about the importance of choice, about the two-edged nature of demanding benevolence. It concerns two boys who embark on an illicit adventure from a settlement on the moon and by accident discover a lotus-land in space. A stimulating book for Year 8 or thereabouts, but appealing mainly to boys.

Joan Aiken's wildly improbable tales of the region of Good King James III are justly popular with able readers in Years 5, 6 and 7. *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*, the first of the series, has long been available in Puffin Books at a cost of 75 cents; it is unlikely, therefore, that many schools will wish to purchase the new Unicorn Books edition at $4.80.

Peter Dickinson is one of the rising stars of children's literature. In *The Gift* he tells the story of a boy who on rare occasions has the gift of seeing into other people's minds — a gift that involves him in anguishing decisions. The characterisation of the boy, his sister, and their shiftless parents is extremely well done. Suitable for class study in about Year 8, it is also available in a hardback edition in the Heinemann New Windmill series.

Lilith Norman's *The Shape of Three* is a welcome addition to the Armada Lions series. The story of a boy's discovery that he has a double, and the turmoil caused when he discovers the explanation, will appeal to thoughtful readers in Years 7 and 8.

The Runaways tells the story of the way in which the fortunes of a boy running away from a reform school and a cheetah escaped from Longleat become intertwined. A highly readable story, it would suit boys in Years 8 and 9. — K.W.

Wild Red Horses by Alan Marshall (Thomas Nelson) Melbourne, 1976, P'back, $1.95.

This paperback and accompanying cassette tape will be sold to schools in a library pack containing 15 copies of the book and the tape. Single copies of the book will be available through booksellers at $1.95. The pack costs $35.00.

The cassette tape titled "How I tell my stories" is an interview with Alan Marshall by Norma Ferris. He discusses the importance of everyday experiences and his own powers of observation which form the starting point for his stories. He reads extracts from some of the short stories in *Wild Red Horses* and comments upon his involvement with life and his intense interest in the people he meets. It is these qualities which come through in Alan Marshall's speaking voice as much as in his stories.

Accompanying the tape are some "Suggestions for Story-Making" by H.J. Chatfield based on the comments and ideas touched upon by the author.

I find the humour and vitality of Alan Marshall's stories enormously appealing and to hear him discussing his work adds another dimension to our concept of the man. He is never self-regarding but derives great pleasure from transforming experiences into artistically wrought stories.

My only reservation about recommending this pack to librarians is the uncertainty about pupils' reactions to Marshall's stories. I would be very inclined to introduce the short stories in the paperback to a range of pupils before investing in the pack. I would also be inclined to let the story and the author "tell the tale" without too much distracting teacher comment. Often, the teachers spend their energies in the futile exercise of convincing pupils against their tastes. Let Alan Marshall have the first and last say. — R.A.

In Love, Out of Love compiled by John L. Foster (Macmillan Topliner) London, 1974, 128 pp., P'back, $1.25.

This book offers twelve stories centering on the theme of falling in love and falling out. The theme may sound hackneyed but the stories are not. They are refreshing and varied, providing plenty of scope for private reading or for starting-points to class discussions.

The last story in the collection, "A Blow for Freedom", is particularly memorable and quite disturbing. It is a fitting finale to a book which shows love as sometimes simple, often complex and often incomprehensible. This collection should appeal to a wide range of readers through the secondary school and deserves the attention of teachers building up class libraries. — R.A.

Break-In by Barry Pointon (Macmillan Topliner) London, 1974, 127 pp., P'back, $1.25.

Break-In is a very realistic story of a young black boy, Denton, who breaks into a house on a new estate together with other members of his gang. When the tough Robbo is caught and Denton unwittingly implicates himself in the break-in, Denton learns the hard way that smart people have to look after themselves first. He learns a lesson more subtle than "crime doesn't pay" and is forced to recognise that acceptance into a peer-gang is not the only goal in life.

This is another title to add to the list of recommended reading for middle adolescents. — R.A.

Westward in Their Wagons by John L. Foster (Macmillan Topliner) London, 1975, 143 pp., P'back, $1.25.

This is a collection of ten stories on the theme of life, death and adventure in the American West. The stories vary in length and theme but are all fast-moving and enjoyable. If you have any doubts about the quality of the stories, read "Gold-mounted Guns" by F.R. Buckley and you'll want to read on.

Macmillan Topliners provide short, easy-to-read books with involving stories geared to the interests of a range of secondary school pupils. If you are at a loss to suggest suitable books for the slow reader with mature interests, survey their list of titles. — R.A.

POETRY

A Map of Australian Verse by James McAuley. (Oxford University Press) Melbourne, 1975, 342 pp, P'back, $7.25, Cloth $13.75.

This critical, informed and inspiring survey of Australian verse looks back to the last years of the nineteenth century and moves forward to the 1970's in a manner which integrates and contrasts major movements and themes in Australian poetry. The poets given comprehensive treatment in the book are Christopher Brennan, John Shaw Neilson, Kenneth Slessor, Judith Wright, A.D. Hope, Douglan Stewart, David Campbell, Rosemary Dobson and James McAuley himself. The last section of the book makes reference to poets like Francis Webb, Les Murray, Bruce Dawe, Chris Wallace-Crabbe and others. Indeed, the book does offer a large-scale map of Australian poetry, the purpose of which is to "help the reader to explore and observe and judge for himself".

Of necessity, Professor McAuley has had to make choices "in excluding and including, highlighting and proportioning" both the work of individual poets and critical comments on it. His comments on poets are cautious rather than flamboyant — a reflection perhaps of the conservatism he remarks upon in Australian poetry of the nineteen-forties, fifties and sixties.

The book offers an introduction to each poet by Professor McAuley; a selection of critical comments on the poet's work; a selection of poems (often substantial enough to test the comments against the poems); and a selected bibliography. As well as the sections on the individual poets, there are several chapters on Popular Verse; The Earlier Twentieth Century; The Ferment of the Forties; Continuity and Change in the Fifties; The Sixties and After.

Apart from the wealth of material McAuley offers the reader on a significant range of Australian poets, his own critical comments have special significance in the light of his extensive experiences as a poet and critic. His chapter on his own poetry is more than interesting and enlightening — it provides proof of his highly-developed sense of objectivity and offers insights into the goals McAuley sets himself in his poetry writing. Read the last sentence of his introduction and test the aspirations it reveals against the achievements of any poet. How many manage to be "lucid and mysterious, gracefully simple but full of secrets"?

I have nothing but admiration for a scholarly book which offers such a wide and intensely researched perspective on Australian poetry. Not only does it fill a large gap in any comprehensive reference library but it is extremely readable and interesting. — R.A.

Chatto Poets for the Young (Chatto and Windus) London, 1974-75, 32 pp. Hard covers.

Squeaking Crust by John Fuller, $2.25.

The Apple Reid by Vernon Scannell, $2.25.

Rhyme Times Rhyme by D.J. Enright, $2.25.

A Parliament of Birds by John Heath-Stubbs, $3.70.

The Devil's Kitchen by Thomas Blackburn, $3.70.

An English Year by Clive Sansom, $3.70.

The Spitfire on the Northern Line by Brian Jones, $3.70.

It is a great pity that the most recent volumes in this attractive series are the victims of a steep price rise; if they had remained at $2.25 a copy it would have been possible simply to recommend the purchase of all titles in the series for the school library. As it is, however, the high cost will probably force prospective purchasers to be selective.

If such is the case, Clive Sansom's *An English Year* would have to be rejected as having less appeal than the others in the series. Most of its nature poems are curiously flat:flat; it seems that it is only when Sansom turns for inspiration from nature to human beings — as in 'Old Charley' and 'Wheelwright' — that his verse comes alive. It is a very conventional collection.

Much more exciting is John Fuller's *Squeaking Crust*. Its main offerings are two long poems, 'Fox-trot' and 'Half a Fortnight', which were commissioned by the Leicestershire Schools Festival of Music. 'Fox-trot' is a most attractive piece, full of exciting rhythmical contrasts. The book also contains a light-lighted poem, 'How to Open', and a group of riddles.

Brian Jones's poems in *The Spitfire on the Northern Line* are more challenging. Indeed, a few of them, such as 'The Sociologist at the Wedding', seem too sophisticated for the intended audience. But his recollections of childhood experiences and his poems of nature are much more accessible, and appeal because of the sharpness of imagery and the range of experience — childbirth, war, love, animals, even 'How to Catch Tiddlers'. This is a book to which the reader — either adolescent or adult — will return again and again.

John Heath-Stubbs's *A Parliament of Birds* is more variable in quality. It contains forty-odd poems about birds, some of which, like 'The Tree-Creeper', are no better than one might expect from able pupils in Year 8.

> I saw a little mouse
> Run up a tree — then twitch
> Out pointed delicate wings,
> And flitter away on the breeze.

Much more attractive, however, is 'The Ravens', which deals with the legend about the ravens in the Tower of London, and which begins:

> *Tolls the bell, hour upon hour —*
> *Always ravens at the Tower.*

Glossy and black the plumes we preen,
And black the sights that we have seen . . .

Myth and legend are used to advantage in many of the poems, but others hinge on allusions that lie outside the experience of child readers. How many children in Years 7 and 8, for example, would ever have heard of Adelina Patti? A few explanatory notes would have helped.

Vernon Scannell's poems in *The Apple-Raid* will please readers in a number of different age groups: 'The Climb and the Dream' could be read with appreciation by children of Year 7 and upwards (a useful poem, by the way, for reading in conjunction with Southall's *Let the Balloon Go*); 'First Fight' will appeal to boys in Years 9 and 10; 'Death of a Snowman' and 'Cat' to quite young children.

The wit of D.J. Enright in *Rhyme Times Rhyme* is generally fairly sophisticated. Even his 'other versions' of well-known fairy stories are probably too subtle for under-fifteens, with the exception of the 'other version' of Red Riding Hood:

It was a case of drugs.
Riding-Hood (or Little Red)
Was merely a carrier —
It was her Grandmother I wanted,
A big-time peddler . . .

Three or four of the poems, like 'A Famous Cat of Siam' and 'Once There Was a Sailor', will delight Years 7 and 8, but most are for Years 9 and 10.

While the publishers' description of *Chatto Poets for the Young* states that the books were 'written with young people in mind', it is difficult to believe that Thomas Blackburn intended most of the poems in *The Devil's Kitchen* for a young audience. This is not to say that the book is unsuitable for school use, but merely that none of the poems would have seemed out of place in a collection intended for adults. While one or two of the poems, like the narrative 'The Farmer's Wife', could be read to younger pupils, this is a book to recommend to pupils in Year 10 and above. — K.W.

Mind Your Own Business by Michael Rosen (Collins/Armada Lions) London, 1975, 95 pp, P'back, 90 cents.

Collected Poems and Verses for Children by Leonard Clark (Dennis Dobson) London, 1975, 151 pp, Hard cover, $9.10.

A Book of Bosh: Lyrics and Prose of Edward Lear ed. Brian Alderson (Kestrel Books) Harmondsworth, 1975, 216 pp, Hard cover, $6.50.

Delightfully illustrated by Quentin Blake, *Mind Your Own Business* is a book of lighthearted verse for children between nine and fourteen. Unlike most books of verse, it is designed to be read straight through as a developing picture of a boy's thoughts, fantasies and everyday activities. Though rather pedestrian in places, it is generally lively and highly readable — a good book to leave around the classroom for kids to pick up. I liked particularly:

From the winter wind
a cold fly
came to our window
where we had frozen our noses
and warmed his feet on the glass.

Leonard Clark has published eight books of verse for children. His *Collected Poems and Verses for Children* brings all these together in one volume — some two hundred poems in all. They range from simple, humorous poems like 'Dromedary' —

Along the shores of Africa the dromedary goes,
A drainpipe of a neck, and leather-padded toes,
Not much of a tail but a window for an eye,
A ton of baggy body over seven feet high.

— to more serious, reflective pieces and perceptive descriptions of nature. Teachers of children from six to fourteen will find it a useful source of new poems for class use.

A Book of Bosh includes not only the familiar Lear limericks and nonsense poems, but many less familiar 'Learical Lyrics and Puffles of Prose', some 'eggstrax' from him letters and his dictionary of 'wurbl inwentions'. A must for the school library. — K.W.

Cambridge Book of English Verse 1939-1975 ed. Alan Bold (Cambridge University Press) ☆CCambridge, 1976, 248 pp, P'back, $8.10.

Sunlight and Storm ed. Susan Corrin (Holt, Rinehart and Winston) Sydney, 1976, 83 pp, P'back, $2.95.

Poetry Workshop ed. Michael and Peter Benton (English Universities Press) London, 1975, 137 pp, P'back, $5.80.

After a War ed. R.A. Marshall (Longman) Auckland, 1975, 97 pp, $3.95.

All of these four anthologies have qualities which raise them above the ordinary.

The new *Cambridge Book of English Verse*, like its predecessor covering the 1900-1939 period, wisely concentrates on the ten most significant poets of the period rather than attempting to give representation to every poet who has made his mark. The ten selected are Edwin Muir, Robert Graves, Hugh McDiarmid, William Empson, Dylan Thomas, Philip Larkin, Charles Tomlinson, Thom Gunn, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. The book is aimed at students in Year 12 and above, and besides devoting a generous amount of space to each poet, includes explanatory notes on the poems.

Sunlight and Storm is a particularly welcome addition to the range of poetry anthologies on the market since it consists of poems from Singapore, Malaysia, China, Japan, India, Israeland several countries of the Middle East. While the emphasis is on contemporary writing, some Chinese, Japanese and Iranian poetry from earlier civilisations is included. When onr compares some of these, translated by people like Arthur Waley and Helen Waddell, with some of the modern offerings, one suspects that the latter suffer in translation. The book is

attractively presented in a similar format to the Holt Rinehart collection of Australian poetry, *Those Fabled Shores*, and a class set would be valuable for use in both the middle and upper secondary school.

The authors of that excellent series *Touchstones* have combined to produce another fine collection in *Poetry Workshop*, which unfortunately bears the same title as another well-known anthology. Aimed at pupils between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, it consists almost entirely of twentieth-century poetry and gives particular attention to five poets: Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath, Seamus Heaney, Robert Frost, and Brian Patten. At the end of each section are better-than-average suggestions for discussion and activity, and the book is very effectively illustrated. Strongly recommended, despite the high price.

After a War is another very well presented anthology, and as the title suggests it is concerned with the theme of war. It is divided into four sections: 'The Great War, 1914-18', 'The Lost Peace, 1919-39), 'Poetry of the Second World War', 'The Age of Anxiety, 1945-'. For a collection coming from New Zealand, it is surprisingly lean in Australasian verse, but in all other respects it is a fine anthology. — K.W.

Orange Moon ed. Garth Boomer and Peter McFarlane (Rigby) Adelaide, 1975, P'back, $3.50.

This collection of over one hundred poems covers poets of more than a dozen countries, and though mainly 20th century, there are enough earlier examples to make some comparisons across periods — an important consideration if sixteen year-olds are to be spared the illusion that their own period (or culture) has a monopoly on wisdom and insight.

The body of the book presents the poems without embellishments. This means that readers (pupils or teacher) can make their own connections, or can read a poem on its own, without the constraints of explicit ordering and grouping. It also means that this is not a book to thrust in front of a class not yet reading poetry with confidence and pleasure.

However, there is a short but very useful appendix, which lists themes represented by the poems and a range of class activities, and indicates how these could be tied to each of the poems. There are also brief ideas about using music and voice recordings. A cassette tape is available, on which poems in the book are read, sung, dramatized and discussed. ($8.00 + sales tax).

The text is an elegant production: attractive type face, heavy paper, poem-to-a-page. There are twenty plates, eleven in colour, photographs of art works which are not so much illustrations of particular poems, as echoes of themes from the poems in visual and plastic forms. It should prove a stimulating and rewarding addition to school poetry texts. — G.E.

See What I Say ed. D. McCulloch and R. Mansfield (Oxford Univ. Press) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $3.95.

The World's Contracted Thus ed. J.A. and J.R. McKenzie (Heinemann) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $5.95.

See What I Say is an attractive anthology of modern poetry selected to suit

(Continued on page 11)

DRAMA

In Context — Language and drama in the Secondary School by John Seely. (Oxford University Press) London, 1976, 170 pp, P'back, $5.95.

This is just the kind of drama book many teachers have been waiting for. As the title implies, the author discusses drama in the context of teaching integrated English, stressing the value of drama in developing pupils' language potential. It is in this area that drama's place has been under-emphasised up to date. The Bullock Report draws attention to the enriching linguistic experiences drama offers pupils and *In Context* meets a real need in suggesting how and why teachers might implement the Bullock Committee's recommendations.

In Context is soundly based on the latest research findings and theories of authorities in the area of language acquisition and development such as M.A.K. Halliday and Basil Bernstein. The ideas of D.E. Adland and J.W. Patrick Creber are also referred to, and Seely takes into account the theories of child drama advanced by people like Peter Slade, Brian Way, R.W. Pemberton-Billing and J.D. Clegg, reinforcing or modifying their ideas in the light of current theories of language development.

Apart from many useful exercises the author outlines for preliminary work, his detailed plans for starting improvisations and analysing and synthesising them provide the degree of direction many drama teachers want.

The book also offers information on directing the school play; using music and sound effects; work on scripted scenes and whole plays. There is a very handy section headed "Resources" which gives a brief resume of the books available for teachers of drama with a grid (check-list) mapping the particular characteristics of each book (age-group; rationale; activities; organisation etc.)

John Seely is obviously very aware of the reservations some teachers have about teaching drama and his realistic appraisal of the inherent difficulties with suggestions for overcoming them will encourage even the most reluctant teacher.

This is by far the most comprehensive, informed book on teaching drama I have read in the past three years. It deserves to be on the compulsory reading-list of every teacher-training institution and on a shelf in every staff library, if not in the hands of every English teacher. — R.A.

The Crazy World of Advertising by Simon Hopkinson (Heinemann — Australian Theatre Workshop), Melbourne, 1975, 58 pp, P'back, $2.50.

The Crazy World of Advertising was devised in response to a need for theatre programmes dealing with current social issues relevant to secondary students. The Melbourne Theatre Company toured throughout Victoria performing this production, with a threefold purpose: to show how an advertising campaign was put together, to provoke the audience into considering some aspects of advertising, and to demonstrate theatre as a practical means of expression.

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The script reproduced in his book is simply a selection of ideas from each of the four very different productions of *The Crazy World of Advertising*.

Simon Hopkinson, the director of the four productions, gives some very interesting Production Notes which should help the teacher wishing to undertake a production centred around the theme of advertising. Extensive research went into the Hopkinson production and a short list of suggested books is given in the Production Notes for pupils' and teachers' use.

I can imagine this script being used very productively in a class interested in advertising, not so much as a script to be followed slavishly, but as a stimulus to research, ideas, writing, and perhaps eventual production. I can think of no more lively way of studying a social issue than to follow the spirit of this production. — R.A.

Richard II; King Lear; The Taming of the Shrew; Henry IV Part 1. (The Macmillan Shakespeare) London, 1975, P'back, 95c each.

These editions of Shakespeare's plays have been designed essentially for schools, as the price, layout and introductions indicate. The text is printed on the right-hand side of the page, with notes opposite, giving a clear uncluttered page layout.

For a school edition of Shakespeare the introductory notes need to be helpful and illuminating. The Macmillan edition gives important background information and some comment on the variety of interpretations. Possibly it is only the better student who bothers to read the introduction anyway, but teachers are often grateful for scholarly comment and information.

At a price under one dollar, these attractive editions of Shakespeare deserve the attention of subject-masters making up their book-room orders. — R.A.

The Dramatic Experience — A Guide to the reading of plays by J.L. Styan (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, P'back ed., 1975, 154 pp, $2.50.

The purpose behind this book, re-issued in paperback ten years after its first publication, is to help students to think of a play, not as a book of words, but as a performance. The ideal is in keeping with current trends in drama teaching but I am not convinced that the book does enough to achieve its purpose.

Professor Styan defines what a play is, discusses different kinds of stages and types of character, the roles of actor and audience and the structure and interplay of plot and subplot. There are charts of theatrical history, a glossary and reading lists. All this is attractively presented and written in a style appropriate to senior school students, but there is no guarantee that plays will be any more relevant or interesting to students as the result of reading this book. In short, it is no substitute for personal involvement in the text of the script but could be useful in a school library as a general drama reference book. — R.A.

The Dream of Chief Crazy Horse by David Pownall (Faber & Faber) London, 1975, 94 pp, P'back, $3.00.

The Dream of Chief Crazy Horse is an entertaining epic written to be acted

by children. The story covers the history of the Red Indian and the European colonists in the Americas in the sixteenth century.

The play is designed for production in schools and offers about sixty parts including small roles and crowd scenes which could be expanded or reduced. The idea behind the play is to provide opportunities for many pupils to be involved in a variety of ways. The action is fast-moving and offers scope for sound effects, colourful props and costumes.

While the epic offers some insight into the atmosphere of the period, its most attractive quality is its entertainment value and large-scale involvement of pupils. It is the kind of play which could start off being one thing and finish up something else. Worth considering for upper primary or lower secondary school. — R.A.

3 Jellyplays by Ann Jellicoe (Faber & Faber) London, 1975, 90 pp, P'back, $4.65.

This book offers three short, lively scripts suitable for primary school pupils and a very unsophisticated Year Seven class. They might be more suitable for secondary school if the pupils were devising an entertainment for younger children.

"You'll Never Guess" is a variation on the story of Rumpelstiltskin, but allows plenty of scope for improvisation and energetic action. It could be used as an enjoyable activity for a Drama Club.

"A Good Thing or a Bad Thing" explores the problem of how to deal with a Monster. It also provides a framework for improvisation, with scope for sound effects and full class involvement.

The three plays have all been produced on stage in London in the last couple of years, especially for young people. — R.A.

Six Dramatists in Search of a Language by Andrew Kennedy (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1975, 271 pp, P'back, $5.00.

Six Dramatists in Search of a Language is a study of the theatrical language of six major dramatists writing in English — Shaw, Eliot, Beckett, Pinter, Osborne and Arden.

This study of theatrical language covers a wide range of theatrical expressiveness — from rhetoric to inarticulateness, from mime to speech-in-action. The author offers a very persuasive argument that modern drama is moving away from a fully expressive dramatic language and in doing so creates problems for those searching for its significance.

Dr Kennedy's argument deserves close attention — the kind of close attention he gives to the dramatists chosen for study. He believes that the study of theatrical language should be an exercise in 'practical criticism' and not merely narrowly linguistic. While he discusses language from the play-text and refers to the language of the performance, the emphasis is on the former. He offers plenty of evidence from selected plays and other works of the dramatists to support his point of view and relates each dramatist to the larger traditions of European drama. — R.A.

Drama Study Units by J. Foster (Heinemann Educational) Longon, 1975, Packs of 20 worksheets on each play, $2.65 ea.

The aim of these unpretentious "work-schemes" is to lead the student to think about each of the six plays and to form his own opinion about it by exploring the text. It is intended that 13-16 year-olds will learn about each play by introducing both playwright and plot-line, and then by close questioning of the "What happens in Act III Scene (i)?" type. Highly structured suggestions for improvisation follow, and the "scheme" concludes with a series of lit-crit essay questions, such as "Show how Wilde uses his characters to poke fun at Victorian upper-class society in this play." Each "scheme" also contains black and white photographs from a production of the play.

The six plays subjected to John Foster's decimation are *An Inspector Calls; Hobson's Choice; The Long and the Short and the Tall; The Importance of Being Ernest; Chips with Everything*, and *A Taste of Honey*. I do not believe that any teacher in Years 7-10 would want to issue these schemes to pupils. It would be better to spend the money on a theatre ticket. — R.K.

Rush — a selection of three episodes from the A.B.C. T.V. Series, with introduction and notes by Neil Fuller, (Heinemann Educational) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $3.95.

Rush is good value for money, being an entertaining and informative book which examines the early gold-rush period realistically through drama. Each script is preceded by cast, location and set details, and historical backgrounds and character outlines are included also to help teachers and students make full use of the script and script directions and to understand more fully aspects of the writer's task and the process of T.V. filming.

The book also provides an extensive and imaginative range of projects and activities for follow-up work e.g. creative writing exercises, discussion topics, research projects, script-writing, video taping and film work suggestions. Such a book would be of use, not only in many areas of English teaching, but in History and Social Studies classrooms as well. — D.P.

Drama Scripts (Macmillan) London, 1975, P'back, $1.75 ea. **The Youth Club, Errand; Adam's Ark.**

The brevity of *The Youth Club* and *Errand* and the fact that they were written by teenagers suggest a welcome addition to the pool of plays suitable for use in a classroom and in a single, (or, perhaps, double) drama period. It is a great pity that the plays themselves are of such poor quality, quite apart from the in appropriateness of British slang for Australian pupils.

The Youth Club, by Patrick Murray, portrays a group of young people under the 'guidance' of a married couple, Bob and Jill, both about 25, who are faced with the prospect of the club closing down. The reason for their lease on the hall not being renewed is the lack of care the group has shown and the apparent acts of vandalism.

Such a theme would seem to be a good vehicle for drama and discussion. Its treatment, however, is lacklustre; the dialogue consists mainly of colloquial

expressions, poor speech and crudities. And the final gesture by the 'guiding' adult in breaking yet another window only serves to re-inforce the accepted and condoned anti-social attitudes presented, as does the only-natural, matter-of-fact stage direction:

'Jill hands Bob a cigarette and they light up.'

The shorter, two character play, *Errand*, by Jim Irvin, is a little better, but gives very little opportunity for dramatic interpretation. It seems better suited to being read and discussed in a theme on Old Age and Loneliness than to enactment by the normal 35+ pupils in a drama class. It may, then, be worth exploring by a specialised drama group, although I do not feel that there is a great deal of character interplay which could involve an audience. The play concerns an old man who lives in the past and whose only contact with the real, modern world is the grocer's delivery boy.

Happily, *Adam's Ark* does not suffer from the same faults. It is longer, but it involves more characters, each with a potential for development by individual actors. The plot is quite gripping and the dialogue contains few local references which could not be understood by Australian pupils.

The story is of a group of people who survive a nuclear attack on Britain because they manage to get to an underground shelter. Because of the radiation they are forced to stay there for eight months and, just as the land is thought safe again, a new, human danger threatens the group.

As the characters involve are mainly senior school pupils, along with their teacher and a few other adults, I believe that students from Years 10, 11 and 12 would greatly enjoy this script. The booklet carries an introductory warning that it is not intended for junior forms. I agree that it may not be fully appreciated or understood by Years 7, 8 and, probably 9, but for older pupils, it certainly offers more literary and dramatic value than the depressingly mundane *Youth Club* or the thin *Errand*. — K.C.

The Christian Brothers by Ron Blair and **A Lesson in English** by Barry Oakley. Currency Double Bills No. 1 (Currency-Methuen), Sydney, 1976, P'back, 86 pp, $1.95.

Currency-Methuen have, in 1976, inaugurated a new series — Currency Double Bills — with an eye very mucy to the school market, particularly the middle secondary school, where new and worthwhile texts for drama study have been notably rare. The format is to provide two Australian plays of moderate length in each volume, together with supplementary material as a stimulus for further class discussion.

The first "double-bill" comprises Ron Blair's *The Christian Brothers* (a great success in two seasons at Sydney's Nimrod Theatre, and on tour across the country), and Barry Oakley's surreal *A Lesson in English*. Each play deals with aspects of the classroom situation (and wider educational issues) in dramatic terms which both students and teachers should readily enjoy and appreciate. Both plays are highly readable, and offer opportunities for imaginative teaching.

If the forthcoming three volumes in this new series maintain the high standard of the first, teachers will soon have available a valuable and much-needed series of inexpensive drama texts. — D.C.R.

A Hard God by Peter Kenna (Currency-Methuen) Sydney, 1976, 90 pp, P'back, $2.50 approx. Teachers' notes available from the publisher.

Although it was first published in the Currency-Methuen Plays Series III in 1974, a new edition of *A Hard God* has been prepared to co-incide with the play's appearance on the list of New South Wales Higher School Certificate Examination drama prescriptions. As one of the most distinguished of recent Australian plays (it had its first season at Sydney's Nimrod Theatre in 1973, toured extensively, and was successfully adapted for ABC-TV), it is a welcome addition to the list.

Written largely out of the author's personal experience, the play deals with a brief period in the lives of the Cassidys, an Irish-Catholic family living in Sydney's western suburbs in 1946. Aggie Cassidy (so memorably played by Gloria Dawn in the Nimrod production) is the family's anchor as they face a series of domestic crises: a superb character, in direct descent from Lawson's Mrs Spicer. Aggie's religious faith wavers as the Cassidys are beset by problems, but she never loses her enormous compassion or her sense of humour. Kenna also deals with a difficult and delicate period in the adolescence of young Joe Cassidy, running the two streams of narrative in tandem. It is an innovative and interesting dramatic structure, though as the author has explained, "I've simply cut the usual cord between plot and sub-plot".

Two of Peter Kenna's major gifts are his feeling for period (evoked in detail after detail), and his ear for the subtleties of spoken language — the play's dialogue is consistently and astonishingly "right". Reviewing the original production, Brian Hoad wrote in *The Bulletin*:

> You could say that *The Doll* is no more and no less than about ordinary people's relationships with themselves and with others; in *A Hard God* Mr Kenna's new maturity has been able to add relationships with conscience, with spirit and with a God. That just about adds up to the total spectrum of human experience. And within that vast canvas he writes not one word that has not got the ring of experience and understanding.

A Hard God is unquestionably one of the most important new plays to have appeared in this country, and deserves the careful attention of teachers planning their senior courses for next year. — F.B.

Getting to Know Series by M. Stewart (Longman) Melbourne, 1974, P'back.

Getting to Know Me 78 pp, $2.25.

Getting to Know Us 130 pp, $2.50.

As the publisher's blurb states, *The Getting to Know Series* is a graded developmental drama course for secondary school students.

Getting to Know Me has a wealth of suggestions for teaching drama to children in the junior secondary school and for those who want a ready-made drama programme, this slim volume would prove ideal. It is more suited, though, to being a teacher's handbook than a class text book.

The work covered takes students through concentration exercises, movement, and role playing.

Getting to Know Us is more designed to be used as a class text book.

The opening sections provide exercises in concentration and improvisation. Thereafter follow samples of one-act plays designed for radio and television. The last section of the book provides a short story to be transformed into a script that the pupils write themselves.

Apparently there is a third book in the Series called *Getting to Know Drama*, which is an introduction to the history of drama and the dramatic form. However, it was not available for review.

The Series is well bound and is certainly worthwhile considering. — R.D.

Ideas in Action by P. Yates and R. Hornby (English University Press) London, 1974, P'back.

Ideas in Action Bk 1, 82 pp, $1.75.

Ideas in Action Bk 2, 113 pp, $3.40.

Ideas in Action Bks 1 & 2 are two books in a Series of five intended to provide material for 5 years of drama work in the secondary school.

The books are so designed that the teacher can use them either as personal handbooks or as class textbooks.

Book 1 has 22 sections and provides students with improvised work in concentration exercises, mime and movement, dance drama, voice projection, mimed stories and word games.

Book 2 is mainly concerned with leading pupils to writing their own scripts through a variety of interesting activities. — R.D.

Dramascripts ed. Guy Williams (Macmillan Education) London, 1975, P'back, $1.50 ea.

Titles: *The Burning Fiery Furnace and David and Goliath* by Guy Williams.

Maggie's Fortune and the Zoological Palace by S. Wright and C. Mullineaux

The Burning Fiery Furnace is a lively mixture of modernism and humour, with the traditional drama of ambition, greed and splendour. Five swiftly-paced acts have brief parts for nineteen characters with scope for others as musicians, court officials, slaves and effects makers. Nebuchadnezzar, in a dazzling storm, is challenged about his riches by the voice from the jet black skies. In the second act reluctant tradesmen are forced to yield their gold under increasing penalties from whipping to execution. Later acts bring the golden image and Shadrach Meshach and Abednego's refusal of worship. The final

act brings the king to humility. A class would thoroughly enjoy work on this play and the scope for imaginative response discussion and writing is rewardingly apparent.

David and Goliath has sixteen characters with dialogue and scope for the rest of the class as guards, attendants, lions and armies. Saul and Samuel, with lively modern dialogue take the play to Jesse's sons in search of David. Jesse's sons Andy, Charlie, Danny, Bobby, Eddie and Franky face tests of strength and wisdom unavailingly; David proves his prowess and has "a good future before" him. The third act ends with David's sling-shot to Goliath.

Maggie's Fortune is a four character play suitable for small group work or whole class involvement in direction and setting. Maggie Tripe, afflicted by high spirits poor speech, and saying what she thinks, leads on initial meeting with Hughberry, the rich grocer, into disaster. A second encounter, after besting the rich young lady, Miss Primkin, resolves with arrangement to elope with Harry Hughberry. A short comedy with scope for enjoyable and rewarding work.

The Zoological Palace involves six characters and is again suitable for class work within period time limits. It revolves around the choice of a new royal pet to replace the princess's pekinese. Early competitors with elephant and boa-constrictor fail. The owner of the zoo lets loose his animals who make a zoo of the palace, while the king and princess leave. The plot's slightness could require careful work for most effective use of this dramascript. — R.L.

MASS MEDIA

Mastering the Media by B. Dwyer, R. Milliss and B. Thomson (Reed Education) Sydney, revised ed, 1976, 128 pp, P'back, $3.25.

The Mass Media by R.B. Heath (Nelson) London, 1975, P'back, $3.65 ea.

I — **Sounds and Images,** 96 pp.
II — **The Popular Press,** 96 pp.
III — **The Persuaders,** 96 pp.

The original edition of *Mastering the Media* provided pupils in Years 9 and 10 with a wealth of meaningful speaking, listening, reading and writing activities, as well as paving the way to their becoming more discriminating consumers of the media. The appearance of this revised edition, which contains an additional section on radio, is thus very welcome. The revision has not been limited to the providing of up-to-date examples: the whole lay-out of the book is much improved.

R.B. Heath, who some years ago produced the very useful *Impact Assignments*, has now turned his attention to the mass media. The three volumes of *The Mass Media* are attractively produced, and contain a good deal of interesting information and worthwhile suggestions for activities. Their usefulness in Australian schools is, however, severely limited, as they naturally draw on the British scene for their examples. For the school library rather than for the textbook stockroom. — K.W.

LITERARY CRITICISM

Language and Literature — A Synthesis by R.D. Eagleson and L. Kramer (Nelson) Melbourne, 1976, 154 pp, P'back, $3.95.

In writing this text Professors Eagleson and Kramer have identified a problem which has caused trouble to English teachers and students for years. Too often, what is called "literary study" is hopelessly divorced from what is called "language study". The odd artificially designed language lessons are offered as concessions to a syllabus requirement that some language study be undertaken. The study of literature involves study of theme, plot, character, mood and so on, in a manner which appears to deny that literature "finds expression through language." The result is that students tend to offer what are often fairly windy generalisations about literary pieces, not informed by close, thoughtful study of the delicate and exciting manner in which the author has used his language to build the total effect.

I think it time to say that many concerned English teachers have trouble assisting their students to find more thoughtful and rewarding ways of exploring literature. It is thus very gratifying to be able to record that Eagleson and Kramer have here made a useful contribution towards helping English students, both senior school and undergraduates, as well as English teachers.

One of the central concerns of the book is to develop the view that linguistic and literary interests, if properly understood, can enrich each other. A synthesis can be achieved in which each is part of the other.

Eagleson and Kramer offer examples of close study of portions of *King Lear*, *Such Is Life*, and two poems by James McAuley. The analysis in particular of the differing uses of "thou" and "you" in *King Lear* I found fascinating.

The book functions well as a text, for after exploring ways in which linguistic insights enrich one's understanding of literature, and literary study can inform linguistic pursuits, the authors offer a good sampling of texts fairly regularly used by senior English students. These include, for example, Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Austen's *Persuasion*, Twain's *Huck Finn*, Donne's *Sunne Rising* and *Batter My Heart*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Miller's *The Crucible*.

The two writers open up an examination of each of the extracts or poems used, and pose further questions for students to explore.

One can only applaud the appearance of such a text, and advise all English teachers to buy it. It is intended to produce an accompanying student manual later. This will be a desirable addition since the text would be, for the average senior school student, too difficult. At the senior school level, it will be of use principally for teachers and for the most able students. — F.C.

Shakespeare Survey 28 ed. Kenneth Muir (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1975, 187 pp, U.K. £7.50.

Shakespeare Survey has become an established and recognised annual publication. As with previous issues, this current number consists of articles devoted to various aspects of Shakespearean studies. There are papers which

limit their view to particular plays, such as A.D. Nuttale "Measure for Measure: the Bed-trick" and F.R. Hill "The Merchant of Venice and the Pattern of Romantic Comedy", while other papers take up more general matters, such as D.A. Latter "Sight-lines in a Conjectural Reconstruction of an Elizabethan Playhouse".

The immediate appeal of any collection of articles is determined by one's particular interests at the time. *Shakespeare Survey* should attract at least teachers of senior years because of its article on Hamlet — Ralph Berry " 'To Say One': an Essay on 'Hamlet' " (p. 107-116). Perhaps yet another assault on this much investigated play. Berry prefers "to think of the play as a prolonged description of a single consciousness". His article is a study of a number of difficult passages, including the one from Act 5 Scene 2 from which the words in the title of the article come. There is no need to surrender to his thesis, but nevertheless he has some interesting observations to make on the text. — R.D.E.

Style and Structure in Literature ed. Roger Fowler (Basil Blackwell), Oxford 1975, 262 pp, Hard cover, U.K. £6.00.

Roger Fowler has given this collection of essays the subtitle *Essays in the New Stylistics*. It is a subtitle which somewhat aptly reveals the main thrust of the book, for many of the papers are concerned with providing a critical review of the theories and practices in the stylistics of recent decades. Quite a bit of attention is given to structuralism — the Russian as well as the French variety — and the application of linguistics to literary criticism.

Given our integrative syllabus for grades 11 and 12 in N.S.W., the first and the last chapters in the book will be of most interest. They also strike me as the best in the volume. In the opening chapter on *The Strategy of Fusion: Dylan Thomas's Syntax*, Donald Freeman illustrates the great value of paying attention to the grammatical structure of a poem. In a clear but not over-technical analysis, he works through three poems to show how the grammar neatly reflects the intent of the poet.

Seymour Chatman in the final chapter on *The Structure of Narrative Transmission* again offers a nicely practical, down-to-earth treatment of his topic. He also demonstrates how an understanding of the operation of language can sharpen our recognition and appreciation of the writer's craft. Happily he blends the analysis of language with a consideration of its function. Along the way we can learn a lot about narrative methods.

This is a book more for teachers than for students. It is mixed in quality and usefulness, but it could well be placed on the list for library purchases. — R.D.E.

The Craft of the Novel by Colin Wilson (Gollancz) London, 1975, 256 pp, Hard cover, $14.50.

The novel is neither dead nor dying; it has strayed into a wilderness of purposelessness; but regenerative forms are at work — in fact we could be on the brink of great forward leap.

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This is the view of perky, audacious, novelist-critic Colin Wilson who, ever since his brash essay in literary criticism, *The Outsiders* has steadfastly rejected pessimism and urged us all to get cracking at remaking this sorry world nearer to the heart's desire.

Beginning with the 'literary bombshell of 1740', Richardson's *Pamela*, and with a backward glance at why Shakespeare failed in *Hamlet*, Wilson makes a swift survey of the main contributors to the novel (and some lesser known ones). You will find out, in trenchant terms, what went wrong with Joyce, Lawrence, Hemingway, Faulkner, Sertre and many others — even Flaubart, Dashaevoky and Tolstoy.

The novel, he asserts, holds a mirror up, not to nature, but to the novelist. It really shows him his self-image. But (and this is Wilson's essential message) a self-image can be largely self-created by an effort of conscious will. So today's novelist must become quite consciously purposeful, a sort of new romantic, but basically optimistic and radically democratic.

At times his generalisations can be breathtaking. But he is never dull, never without a force of conviction. This is good, clear, vivid writing, an object lesson to most academic critics of literature. I enjoyed the book thoroughly. Where he deals with novels I have read, I find myself almost always in enthusiastic agreement. As to his philosophy of optimism, I nod approval and wonder if I am capable of the necessary effort. — R.D.W.

Kenneth Slessor by Graham Burns (Australian Writers and their Work). (Oxford University Press) Melbourne, 1975, P'back, $1.75.

Movements in English Literature 1900-1940 by Christopher Gillie (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1975, P'back.

The Fundamentals of Literary Criticism by Mark Roberts (Basil Blackwell) Oxford, 1975, P'back, $7.20.

Odes, Pastorals, Masques by John Milton, eds. Broadbent et al. (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1975, P'back, $4.00.

William Blake by Martin K. Nurmi (Hutchinson University Library) London, 1975, P'back, $5.95.

Graham Burns' study of Kenneth Slessor is a 20,000 word monograph in the *Australian Writers and their Work* series. The approach is mainly a critical one at an advanced level, which takes Slessor's recent *Bread and Wine* (1970) prose writings into account in reading the poems and understanding the poet's background. Burns uses other critics intelligently, but emphasises in a Melbourne way a moral concern with the poetry as distinct from following up aspects of Slessor's own work and his association with Norman Lindsay which have come in for recent attention from Sydney critics such as T.L. Sturm.

Christopher Gillie is College Lecturer at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. His *Movements in English Literature 1900-1940* is a clear, concise and measured account of the major figures in poetry, drama, fiction and criticism who were

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writing in England at the time. While limited in its scope to the English scene, it is an excellent introduction for advanced students at the secondary level and for general readers in universities and elsewhere.

The Fundamentals of Literary Criticism is a sensible discussion by Professor Mark Roberts of Queen's University, Belfast, which allows a comprehensive balance of abstract and particular issues to emerge on methods of literary criticism. The critical process, as he sees it, begins with "interpretation" or responding intelligently to a poem, involves an "orientation" or stance on the part of the critic, an "evaluation" or judgment of the achievement in the writing, and "articulation" or powers of communication by the critic.

John Milton's *Odes, Pastorals Masques* is part of the Cambridge Milton series designed for schools and colleges under the general editorship of J.D. Broadbent. It contains the texts of ten Milton poems (including *Comus*) with commentaries on meanings and allusions together with selections of relevant criticism from modern and traditional scholarship. The book is a valuable guide for teachers and students, and while the apparatus buries the poems on occasions it will be a welcome addition to libraries.

Martin K. Nurmi's *William Blake* is a concentrated but readable introduction to Blake's work. It follows on the achievement of Northrop Frye's *Fearful Symmetry* and David V. Erdman's *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, and expounds the work and life of Blake in ways that make his achievement accessible to a reader who is aware of, and intimidated by, the huge range of interpretation now available through the modern revival of enthusiasm for Blake. — J.T.

Understanding Hamlet by P. Winders (Pergamon Press) London, 1976, 135 pp, P'back, $4.50.

It is a pity this book was reprinted — even published. It is just not what we want to put before our students. It encourages all the worst aspects of *lit. crit.*, sending students away from the text to explore the opinions of others. Some of the exercises are horrendous. A number are irrelevant for an understanding of the text, others call for a subjective response rather than a substantiated conclusion. Do we really want to be asking our students such questions as: (1) If you were producing *Hamlet*, how would you present the ghost? or (2) Examine your attitude towards Hamlet as the play progresses and say whether you find yourself at all in agreement with Marowitz's opinion? or (3) By examining the use which Shakespeare has made of his source material, is it possible to deduce anything about Shakespeare's interest in his play?

By and large Winders seems to be having a bit of all sides. His book traverses all the possible interpretations of *Hamlet*, but it never seems to me to help one really understand the play. — R.D.E.

The Language of Modern Poetry by A.C. Partridge (Andre Deutsch) London, 1976, 351 pp, U.K. £7.50.

In these days when the integration of language and literature is much to the fore, Professor Partridge's new book will be a welcome publication. It is

written within the perspective that "the disciplines of language and literature are diplomatically inseparable. They are interdependent activities." Consequently one finds within its paper a lot of illuminating information which does not stop short at the presentation of linguistic facts but which is applied to evaluative purposes.

Although the book is largely devoted to a study of Yeats, Eliot and Auden, there are chapters which are wider in scope and which help to justify the title. There are three introductory ones on *Free Verse, The Forebears of Modern Poetry,* and *Form and Rhythm: Meaning and Rhetoric.* A concluding chapter takes us into *New Lines, Dylan Thomas and Conclusions.*

The decision to concentrate on Yeats, Eliot and Auden was a deliberate one, as Partridge regards them "as the dominant figures in language and technical accomplishment" in the period. There will no doubt be arguments about this, but the result does avoid the weaknesses of a superficial survey which a wider policy could have produced.

This is a book more for teachers than for students. Although one would not agree with all that Partridge says about language or literature — and his use of value terms can be overdone — there is a place for the book in the school library where both staff and senior students might benefit from the material it contains. — R.D.E.

The Poet's Calling by Robin Skelton (Heinemann) London, 1975, P'back, $5.70.

The prosaic reviewer in flat-footed approach was daunted by the opening chapters, but thoroughly commends this book to a wide readership of some maturity. Libraries for late secondary and tertiary education need it to meet individual needs. English teachers will find it informative and often fascinating. Aspiring poets will be enlightened, and everyone else, according to interest in poetry, will find something for themselves.

Mr Skelton brings a wealth of experience and ability to writing *The Poet's Calling.* The opening chapters, steeped in Romantic ecstasy and poet-childhood experiences of intuitive and visionary insights, seem all too ecoteric and too touched by the divine. Then suddenly, in "The Priestlike Task", from magic and curse, one is involved in dealing with the sheer power of language.

Three chapters, "Poet's Workshop", "A Learned and Difficult Art", and "Poems in their Beginnings", are most interesting and informative. Hard work on technique, words, and form is seen in poetry-making. Five poets have given their worksheets showing a poem begun and reworked through many drafts to its final shaping. The kinds of knowledge the poet calls on are shown as necessary as other tools of his craft.

"Many Modern Modes" is especially useful in elucidating discovery and techniques in modern poetry. Liberally illustrative in modern poems discussed, the sense and purpose in what is happening in the poems is explored.

The final chapters are more philosophic concerning the problem of authority for the poet, and the poet's way of life. Mr Skelton has given both comprehensively and competently out of his experience. — R.L.

Shakespeare's Comedy of Love by Alexander Leggatt (Methuen) London, 1974. Hard cover $11.90.

A very fine book, worth every cent of its price. I delight in Leggatt's style which is a pleasure to read, and in the sound documentation of evidence from the text of each of his comments. It's all extremely alive and fresh, which is at once to say that he achieves his aim of showing each of the comedies of romantic love for its uniqueness and variety.

Recognising the bases of comparison in theme and recurring plot situations, he also puts paid to any view of standardising plot devices and techniques, or comment on thematic interests, language, or conventions. In each play such elements are shown to occur with an individuality, and uniqueness of purpose and the way it is used.

The chapter on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* opens: "When Titania meets Bottom in the wood near Athens, we see a fairy confronting a mortal, and finding him more wonderful than he finds her." The dialogue from Act III, i. 125-35 opens his clear-sighted discussion of what is going on between the two. These observations show two points of view where ". . . each if locked in his own private understanding, confident, self-enclosed and essentially innocent." ". . . It is all very well for Bottom to chatter away about reason and love; he has the detachment of the totally immune. But Titania is caught up in the experience . . ." . . . and, later "Each one's assessment of the other is amusingly wrong: Bottom is hardly an object of beauty and grace, nor is plain 'mistress' an adequate form of address for Titania. On reflection, there is something to be said for each of these mistaken views: for all his mortal grossness, Bottom has been touched by magic; and the fairy queen is in the grip of a passion we have already seen affecting mortals, and affecting them in a similar way . . ." (from pp 89-90).

I hope this long quoting on one small aspect is indicative of the valuable close textural study of dialogue, and of the freshness in observation that repays a reading of any chapter. All the plays usually studied in high schools receive close and explorative study here, so that teachers and senior students without access to this book are the poorer for that. Highly recommended. — R.L.

Hamlet: A Study in Critical Method by A.J.A. Waldock (Sydney University Press) Sydney, 1975. Hard cover, $4.00.

This re-publication of Professor Waldock's 1931 study is most welcome, not least in its giving opportunity for departmental and school libraries to obtain a copy. Even recently, I have met students whose English teachers still propounded Bradley's "character flaw" of irresolution theory as a chief reading of the play; it is evident Waldock is needed for all its pre-dating Wilson Knight and the later critics by thirty years and more. Any study of the play must benefit from this author's clear-sightedness in appraisal.

(Continued at bottom of page 78)

BOOKS FOR THE SLOWER LEARNER

Prose and Cons: Book One by David Hill and Michael Richards (Longman Paul) New Zealand, 1975, 74 pp., P'back, $3.95.

Prose and Cons is yet another book attempting to deal with the problem of teaching the thematic approach. It is a successful attempt because the authors' stated aim, to provide for the slow pupil, has been achieved by the given topics, language and activities which demand understanding and evaluation.

Often theme books dwell on one theme for far too long, with the consequence that a slow pupil becomes bored and perhaps disenchanted, but *Prose and Cons* gives a sufficient number of varied activities and stimuli. The topics of this book vary from general to specific themes, including topics on feelings, fashion, "dirty water", nicotine, lifestyle, and dreams. Each page, which is the length of each topic, has an extract from which are derived the activities and exercises.

There are direction and purpose in the topics and follow-up activities. The format and given directions are precise, and the language is appropriate, but not too simple, for a slow pupil in Years 8 and 9.

The most pleasing aspect of the book is that while allowing for creative and spontaneous responses, language skills have not been forgotten. Spelling, sentence structure and word meaning have been dealt with in an interesting and subtle manner.

For too long, the slow pupil has been ignored but *Prose and Cons* has recognized the special needs of such a pupil. It is for this reason that I recommend the use of this theme book for the English teacher of slow pupils in Years 8 and 9. — M.A.R.

Threesomes Series by T.V. Cooke (Reed Education) Sydney, 1975, 64 pp, P'back, $1.60 ea.

Titles: *Pollution, Protection and People; Myth, Magic and Monsters.*

The earlier volumes in the *Threesomes Series (Shark, Surf and Scuba* and *Nuggets, New Chums and Ned Kelly)* have already proved their worth as source books for less able pupils. The two new books in the series provide a range of meaningful activities in reading, writing and speaking and a wealth of interesting source material. The books are well illustrated with black-and-white photographs and drawings. The absence of colour must be seen as something of a disadvantage, but $1.60 each these books are exceptionally good value. For Years 7, 8, 9. — K.W.

Falcon Comics (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1975, $4.50 pack, 95 cents ea.

Series One:

1. **Cucumber Blues.** Rick and Tina Amor.
2. **The Ghost of Gaffer's Creek.** Rick and Tina Amor.
3. **Into the Black Mountain**)
4. **Battle Beneath the Mountain**)

5. **Black Mountain Breakdown**) Colin Stevens.
plus)
Wiggy Cramp in the Wasteland)

This is a series of readers, in comic form, for upper primary and secondary students retarded in reading. The Teacher's Notes accompanying the series suggests that "Falcon Comics are intended for readers from 10 upwards, with a reading age of 8-9.6 years." The interest level is indicated as 11-16 years over the whole series and the subjects of the stories range from a mystery of pop stars turned into cucumbers, to a ghost story, to fantasy in the three-part adventure of Chubs, Spike and Harry with the Bunyips. Some students who are not interested in fantasy will not find the subjects attractive but their tastes might be catered for in any future series.

The authors have tried to appeal to teenage readers by giving their characters highly colloquial speech. While this might be, to some extent, in keeping with the suggestion in the Bullock Report (U.K.) that the language in readers should match the spoken language familiar to the child, the speech in the comics does often seem exaggerated and contrived.

The format of the comics appeals to those retarded readers who are demoralized by the appearance of a page full of words. Each of the books has quite a limited number of words on the page (usually less than fifty), with difficult words treated in footnotes where they are divided into syllables and their pronunciations given. There are occasions when both syllabification and pronunciation given are questionable.

Brief Teacher's Notes accompany the series, outlining the general approach and listing the particular rules to be revised in each reader. It might be considered by many teachers that the attempt to cover too many rules in each reader and that the comics would be more useful if they aimed at consolidating two or three rules at a time.

Finally, although the idea of the comics is good, the danger remains that students can often comprehend the story without actually reading the words and, consequently, their value as readers is lessened. — F.L.

Falcon Comics (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1976, (Series two), $4.50 pack, 95 cents each.

Titles: *Sylvia* by Rick and Tina Amor, *Tram Fury* by Geoff Cook, *V8 Madness* by Neil Curtis, *Herbie* by Izy Marmur and *Moven Marven* by Don Porter.

These comics are designed for interest age from 10 upwards with a reading age of 8 to 9½ years. Each title is separately graded in a three page teachers' notes pamphlet. Feedback from girls in remedial reading groups was less than enthusiastic but the resource teacher said the comics were helping the less confident pupils to achieve a quick read without the pressure they feel sometimes with a book. The black and white drawings give a good indication of the story line and characters. A few polysyllabic words are asterisked in the script and printed at the bottom of the page thus: "i/den/tif/ic/a/tion" with a

maximum of one entry per page. I can't decide whether this is helpful or not. Comic style does allow large print but whether it is clearer or not is debatable. — E.T.

Bridge Books 1-8 by Graham and Jennifer Upton (Cambridge University Press) Cambridge, 1975, P'back, $1.70 ea.

Titles: 1. Tim!; 2. City life; 3. After School; 4. Going away; 5. Away from home; 6. Country life; 7. Time off; 8. The dance.

Attractively illustrated, these books make a serial story for reading ages 7.6 to 8.6 years, based on repetition of sight vocabulary and the use of short phrases and sentences. Tim and his friends are in fourteen to fifteen, and face conflicts about leaving school, job implications, and city/country living. Tim, a city boy, dislikes flat-living, school-work and city work. The first four books centre on family wrangles; characters are sterotyped; and negative attitudes dominate, but one must concede realism. As vocabulary becomes more varied, and with an increase of characters, incident, and variety of attitudes and roles, the series becomes more enjoyable. Recapitulation exercises and points for discussion follow each chapter. Despite limitations, perceptions of Tim and his growing understanding through the variety of experience are well written. — R.L.

Bulls-Eye Books (Hutchinson) London, 1975, P'back, $1.95 ea.

Running Blind by Desmond Bagley, 128 pp.

The Land God Gave to Cain by Hammond Innes, 128 pp.

Live and Let Die by Ian Fleming, 128 pp.

The Chrysalids by John Wyndham, 127 pp.

The Scorpio Letters by Victor Canning, 122 pp.

The Dam Busters by Paul Brickhill, 116 pp.

Barcoo Series (McGraw-Hill) Sydney, 1975, P'back, $1.25 ea.

Guns and Goals by Wal Watkins, 92 pp.

The Energy Ball from Planet 5 by Mervyn Dempsey, 90 pp.

Bulls-Eye Books, which offer simplified versions of popular novels for moderately retarded readers in about Year 10 and for young adults, deserve to be better known, for far too little is available for such readers. Inevitably, the simplified style becomes very pedestrian —

> James Bond, British Secret Service Agent 007, got into his car. It was a grey Bentley, made in 1933. As soon as he touched the starter, the engine came to life. Bond drove slowly through the London fog. He was on his way to see M, head of the British Secret Service.

— but there is plenty of action and the presentation is sufficiently 'adult' to make such readers feel that they are not being patronised.

Of much the same level of difficulty, and appropriate for much the same age group (and for Years 8 and 9 as well), are the latest additions to the *Barcoo Series*. While *The Energy Ball* makes a few gestures towards catering for female readers, both books are oriented towards boys' interests.

Both series are to be recommended as providing useful stepping-stones towards the goal of independence in reading. — K.W.

Orbit Series (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1976, 80 pp, P'back, $1.50 each.

Titles: *I Love You, so Shut Up* by Beth Greenaway, *Gatecrashed* by Joan Seppings, *Liz* by Pauline Reilly.

These titles were trialled by an unstreamed Year 8 class of girls. They were popular with both slow and accomplished readers and provoked ready discussion with their recognisable, Australian city-life situations. The girls liked *Liz* best of all. Liz runs away because she would rather be a carpenter like her father than take the office job her mother wants her to. On the way North, she is picked up by a truckie and ends up a member of the lifesaving club before her anxious parents find her and make a final-pages reconciliation. The girls thought that boys would enjoy this one and also *Gatecrashed*. A party is invaded by some unwelcome "guests", there are some fights and plenty of "What happens next" tension. *I Love You, so Shut Up*, despite its title, was dismissed as sentimental and is about the relationship between a 14-year-old girl and a 7-year-old boy. — E.T.

Flag Series (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1976, P'back, $1.50 each.

Titles: *The Blue Mini-bike* by Roger Vaughan Carr, *The First Day* by Terry Saunders, *Leather Coats* by Maureen Stewart, *Weekend* by Michael Dugan, *It Isn't Easy* by Lucy Lonsdale.

This series is intended for interest age 13 years to 16 years with a reading age of 9 to 10½ years. When tried by the same class and at the same time as the Orbit series, no one remarked about any "slow readers' book" characteristics. When asked, one girl said she thought that the print was a bit larger but nobody noticed the list of words in the back pages. Both series have very effective photos on the covers and good design inside. Again, these titles succeed because of the high interest evoked very early in the readers' experience of the book. The line drawings follow the main incidents of the stories in both series and are useful for the teacher asking "What happened here?" All titles were popular with a wide cross section of girls and they thought that boys would particularly like *"Weekend"*. Here three boys go camping and try themselves out at drinking and picking up girls. *In First Day*, a girl leaves school against her mum's advice but doesn't enjoy her first job because the office ogre makes life difficult for her. She quits but thinks the next job will be easy. *It Isn't Easy* was also popular and tells of a girl who gets pregnant; the boy disappears so the girl runs off too and finds help from a married couple in a boarding house. The adoption issue is discussed but not the question of contraceptives. There are two pages of teachers' notes loose leafed into the back of each book relating to the phonics of the pupils' word list. — E.T.

Spinners (Macmillan) Melbourne, 1976, 32 pp, P'back, 95 cents ea.

Eddie by Lucy Lonsdale; *Golden Ghost* by Michael Dugan; *The Race* by Michael Dugan; *Patches* by Roger Vaughan Carr; *Strike a Dragon* by Roger Vaughan Carr; *Stormboat* by Roger Vaughan Carr.

Patchwork Paperbacks (Cassell) Sydney, 1976, P'back, $1.50 ea.

The Man Who Loved Aeroplanes by Michael Hamerston, 94 pp.

The Man Who became a Gorilla by Barry Carozzi, 90 pp.

Bushed by Dick Phay, 103 pp.

The Frozen Sky by Lee Harding, 102 pp.

Encounter Series (Cassell) Melbourne, 1976, P'back, $1.50 ea.

Flop and Mick and John and Me by Barry Breen, 95 pp.

The Children of Atlantis by Lee Harding, 104 pp.

Debbie's Guy by Roger Vaughan Carr, 114 pp.

Under the Silkwood by Hesba Brinsmead, 114 pp.

Red Snapper Night by William Green, 104 pp.

Spinners are intended for readers from 10-16 years and upwards, with a reading age of approximately 8-9 years. Each contains a sheet of teacher's notes, strongly phonic in emphasis. The stories are pleasant enough, the most engaging being *Strike a Dragon*. A useful series, though I doubt whether the sixteens and over would find them interesting — with the possible exception of the ghost story, *Golden Ghost*.

The new batch of *Patchwork Paperbacks*, aimed at much the same market, seem to offer rather more interesting reading. They range from a piece of science fiction *(The Frozen Sky)* to a story of privations in the Australian Outback *(Bushed)*. Barry Carozzi, the editor of the series, contributes an engaging circus story, *The Man Who Became a Gorilla*.

Barry Carozzi is also the advisory editor for Cassell's *Encounter Series*, which is aimed at slightly more able readers. Barry Breen's *Flop and Mick and John and Me* is a collection of his short stories, including the very popular 'The Bad Deeds Gang'. Hesba Brinsmead exhibits her usual story-telling skill in *Under the Silkwood*, and the other three titles in the series offer entertaining reading for slower readers in Year 7 to 10. — K.W.

(Continued from page 72)

In refuting the critical approaches of Goethe, Coleridge, and Bradley, and of later studies based on psyche-analytic readings, or on a culling of historical sources, Professor Waldock also provides useful elucidation of the text of the play. Throughout his arguments, we have his own lucid thinking on the issues of procastination, of the feigned madness, of Hamlet's obsession about Gertrude's re-marrying, and on the players' play scene and the prayer scene. This work remains eminently useful in promoting clearer thinking in study of *Hamlet*. — R.L.

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